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Budget 99 12 PAGE SPECIAL

THE MOST SEARCHING ANALYSIS — THE TOP WRITERS



Showman Brown's 22p shock

More for pensioners and families: petrol, tobacco and Miras hit

By Philip Webster and Alasdair Murray

GORDON BROWN pulled a £4 billion tax surprise out of the hat yesterday with a cut in the basic rate of income tax to 22p next year — its lowest level for 70 years — and the immediate introduction of the long-promised 10p starting rate.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer delighted Labour MPs with a spend-and-tax-cut package that had all the hallmarks of a pre-election Budget at least two years before Tony Blair has to go to the polls. And for Mr Brown, revelling in his role as showman, the basic rate cut was the biggest Budget secret for years.

The biggest gainers were families and the elderly, as he announced above-inflation increases in child benefit and a five-fold increase in the £20 allowance to help pensioners through the winter.

But the headline giveaways in direct tax were balanced by squeezes elsewhere, with the outright abolition next year of the remaining 10 per cent of mortgage interest tax relief; the scrapping of the married couples' allowance, to be replaced by a new tax credit for children which will go only to



"Do you want to swap cars, son?"

parents earning less than £40,000; a rise in national insurance for middle- and upper-income earners, and higher taxes on company cars.

Mr Brown also glided over the abolition of the 20p rate of tax next year, and the fact that the Treasury will have a £1.6 billion bonus for the year between the abolition of the married couples' allowance and the launch of the child tax credit. Those changes led William Hague to accuse him of being the "pickpocket Chancellor who shakes your hand with a smile after he has stealthily removed your wallet".

Even so Conservative MPs were as stunned by their Labour colleagues by a combination of tax cuts and help for enterprise that could easily have come from a Tory Chancellor. They included a series of measures to help business, including slashing the main corporation tax rate on company profits from 31p to 30p and the rate for small companies to 20p from this April, another penny cut.

Senior Treasury sources hailed the Budget as the most radical for decades because of its tax reforms, and the Treasury claimed last night that 20 million of Britain's 26 million households would be better off at the end of three years as a result of the Budget. The losers include the better-off, particularly home-buyers without children.

Mr Brown also announced another £1 billion for the public services, including £500 million for health, most of which will be used to upgrade casualty units, and £170 million for crime prevention.

The measures were part of a £6 billion boost to the economy made possible after Mr Brown found that he had another £10 billion to play with compared with last year's Comprehensive Spending Review figures.

Although revenue was £8 billion down, much of it because of tobacco smuggling and the drop in oil prices, spending was £18 billion lower than expected for the next three years — £9 billion of that thanks to lower spending on social security and £4 billion due to lower debt interest payments.

The Chancellor decided to use £4 billion of that extra cash to cut borrowing, a similar amount on tax cuts and £2 billion on extra public spending.

In spite of the handouts Mr Brown was keen to reassure the markets that he was not taking risks — and the Conservatives were swift to point out that the overall tax burden is likely to be higher than when Labour came to power — but there were fears in the City that the Chancellor's apparent generosity might force the Bank of England to call a halt to its rate-cutting spree for fear of fuelling a consumer boom.

The pound climbed against both the dollar and the euro with traders concluding that interest rates would stay on hold, and there was also concern that Mr Brown's predictions for economic growth could be too optimistic and that his plans could yet be blown off course.

Ian Peters, deputy director of the British Chambers of Commerce, said: "The sting in the tail may be that the Bank of England may have less room to reduce interest rates than we would have wished."

And Ruth Lea, head of policy at the Institute of Directors, said: "It looks a touch generous to me. We wanted to see looser monetary policy and tighter fiscal policy and it looks as if we're getting the opposite."

A failure to cut interest rates would hit manufacturing companies, which are already mired in recession, even harder. John Monks, the TUC General Secretary, said: "I am still very concerned about job losses in the manufacturing sector, particularly with the high value of the pound against the euro."

The stock market, however, gave the Budget a warmer reception, closing up 28.9 at 6237.7, some 16 points higher than when the Chancellor stood up. Traders also pointed out that the most surprising cut — the penny off the basic rate of income tax next year — was announced after the markets had closed, and they suggested that retail and other consumer shares may push the market higher today.

Among his other "rabbits", Mr Brown had announced an early boost for the millennium celebrations by freezing duty

Continued on page 2, col 5

- 10p income tax rate on first £1,500 from April 1999
- 1p off basic income tax rate, down to 22p from April 2000
- New children's tax credit to replace married couple's allowance
- Mortgage interest relief (Miras) abolished from April 2000
- Pensioners' winter allowance up from £20 to £100
- Cut of £55 in excise duty for cars with below 1,100 cc engines
- New 10p corporation tax rate for small businesses
- Share ownership scheme for workers to take stake in their firms
- £60-a-week credit for over-50s moving off welfare into jobs
- New energy tax on business from April 2001
- Extra £1.1 billion for schools, hospitals and crime prevention
- Stamp duty up 0.5 per cent on properties over £250,000
- Duty on spirits, beer and wine frozen
- 17.5p on 20 cigarettes, 7.5p on pack of five cigars
- 4.25p on litre of leaded and 3.79p on litre of unleaded petrol
- 900,000 taken out of National Insurance by raising thresholds
- Rise in National Insurance for those earning more than £26,000
- New research and development tax credit for small businesses
- Child benefit up to £15 a week for first child, £10 for others, from April 2000
- Company car tax reform



PETER NICHOLLS

Who wins, who loses?

The Times jury gives its verdict

By Susie Steiner

THE losers were, as you would expect, disappointed. But most of the *Times* Budget '99 jury were winners — and many were astonished.

The Times brought together more than a dozen men, women and children to discover the effect of the Chancellor's work yesterday on the wider British public.

While the group watched Gordon Brown detail his changes in the Commons, a team of accountants were on hand to calculate the impact on their bank balances. The results were unexpected.

Elspeth May, of KPMG, said: "What's interesting is that at first sight this Budget looked as if it was only benefiting people on lower incomes, but if you look at the detail on all the in-coming tax changes, the higher rate tax payers come off better. People with children fare better than those without, and the elderly fare best of all."

Violet Newitt, an 88-year-old with a basic state pension, saw her income rise by £600 a year. And the small-businessman, John Brandler, saw a pleasing cut in his corporation tax but no reduction in the mountain of paperwork that swamps his art gallery each year.

The verdict, pages 14, 15

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Boy doing his homework in class casts a cloud over the prizegiving



William Hague's blue scrawl said it all. To watch the Tory Leader furiously reworking his notes as the Chancellor spoke was to watch a desperate rearguard action. Relaxed, almost rakish, in a star-spangled tie, Gordon Brown strode through a Budget that sounded more like a prizegiving than an audit.

Hunched beside his Shadow Chancellor, Mr Hague executed a high-speed shuffle through an untidy sheaf bristling with Post-It notes. Every time Brown turned a page, Hague put his pen through another passage. Sometimes he excised whole pages. When not deleting he was scribbling fit to bust.

The Prime Minister seemed bored. Beside his meatloaf of a Chancellor, Tony Blair looked almost fey. As Brown pulled rabbits, tax-cuts, silk handkerchiefs, computers and hospital wards out of his hat — and as excited Labour backbenchers squealed — Mr Blair showed the strain, staring, tight-faced, at the ceiling.

For this was Brown's afternoon: one of the best he has had. After a slow start he tossed in a goodie here, a pleasant surprise there: then a tax break, a university laboratory or a school computer or two. MPs perked up. But the prizes grew. Tax cuts, a 10p starting rate, a halving of vehicle excise duty . . . Hague was now a whirlwind of insertion and deletion; the benches behind him had fallen silent.

The Chancellor increased stamp duty on house-purchase: "76 per cent of families are unaffected," he drawled. Peter Mandelson's head sank in his hands. Brown quintupled the pensioners' winter bonus. Labour cheered. Hague crossed out a whole page. Brown linked pensioners' minimum income guarantee to earnings. Government backbenchers went wild. Hague scribbled some more.

This was becoming almost festive. It all sounded too good to be true. Cheering grew as Brown promised to reduce the basic rate of income tax from 23 to 22 per cent. The sharp-minded noticed that he did not mention he was removing the 20 per cent band.

Was it, then, done with mirrors? Amid the balloons and whizzbangs, an air of unreality grew. This, the Chancellor had said, was "the new economy". There would be a "new computer strategy". "A million new men and women" would open individual learning accounts.

Oh brave new world, that hath such creatures in it! Like some latter-day Prospero, Gordon Brown had dispensed with the whisky and water chancellors used to sip, and armed himself instead with a magician's staff as he unveiled an enchanted island in which things that didn't seem to add up, somehow did.

Call it confidence or bombast, but his speech was heavily punctuated with laudatory references to his own transformation of the economic order. Brown sat down to unmodified rapture all around him.

Now Hague had to speak. In his place I would have dived, sobbing, under the Clerks' Table.

The Opposition Leader's response, launched from a heap of crumpled papers and Post-It notes, was feisty, gutsy, well-briefed and sharp. Those who doubt Hague's resilience should note the way he punched his way out of a corner. Such was the violence and momentum of his counter-attack — stealth-taxes, he called them, in a stealth-Budget — that many who came to cheer the Chancellor, stayed to scratch their heads.

INSIDE

Argentina visit starts

The Prince of Wales arrived in Buenos Aires for a three-day official visit to Argentina. In a public speech, he called for a full return to friendship between the two countries and made no mention of the still-disputed Falkland Islands .... Page 2

Court frees HIV trio

The former French Health Minister was convicted in the HIV-contaminated blood case but was let off with a censure. The former Prime Minister, Laurent Fabius, and the ex-Social Affairs and Health Minister were acquitted .... Page 21

Flood alert

Householders on Derwentside near York prepared for this century's highest floods. Melting snow and six inches of rain on the North York Moors have burst the banks upstream at Malton .... Page 5

Alliance cost me the chance to clear name, says Hamilton


Hamilton: an outcast

BY FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

PARLIAMENT and the chairman of Harrods, Mohamed Al Fayed, have joined forces to deny the former MP Neil Hamilton the chance to clear his name of bribery allegations, the Court of Appeal was told yesterday.

Desmond Browne, QC, for Mr Hamilton, said that Mr Al Fayed's allegations — that he bribed him to ask parliamentary questions — had rendered his client an outcast in public life. "He has lost his career, his reputation, and his wife has lost her job as his secretary," he said.

"On his fiftieth birthday, he is effectively unemployable, and without access to the courts he has no hope of salvaging his career. Yet it would seem that Parliament and Mr Al Fayed have got together to deny him the right to come to this court — a constitutional right as old as Magna Carta."

Mr Browne was addressing Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, sitting with Lords Justices Laws and Hirst, on the second day of an appeal by Mr Al Fayed. Mr Al Fayed is contesting a High Court decision last summer that Mr Hamilton can proceed with his libel action over allegations made by Mr Al Fayed in a television documentary that he had paid Mr Hamilton in cash for asking questions in Parliament.

Mr Al Fayed's lawyers have argued that because Parliament has already made a ruling on the issue, the libel action in the courts cannot go ahead as this would amount to questioning the authority of Parliament.

George Carman, QC, for Mr Al Fayed, has told the judges that to question Parliament's decision would amount to an attack on its historic rights as protected under Article 9 of the Bill of Rights 1689.

But yesterday Mr Browne dismissed the argument that "external critical evaluation of proceedings in Parliament" was not allowed as "wholly misconceived". He added: "The right of fair comment and critical evaluation is absolutely fundamental in a democratic society. If a judge cannot evaluate what goes on in Parliament because of Article 9 of the Bill of Rights, then none of us can do so and the right to freedom of speech disappears."

Mr Browne said there was no argument about a conflict between one adjudication (Parliament) and another (the courts) because they would be looking at different evidence and would be using different procedures. He rejected the notion that parliamentary privilege was so sensitive that it would be undermined by a court's coming to a different conclusion. "Great oaks can take the occasional storm in the way that orchids can't."

He said that the inquiry by Sir Gordon Downey into the allegations had not been approved or rejected by the Commons Committee on Standards and Privileges. Its findings had not been given the authority that Sir Gordon had sought, he said. They did not impose any notional penalty on him. But, he told the judges, there was "no suggestion of corruption or criminality — and that being so, the Select Committee simply left Sir Gordon's findings alone. But what it did not do was approve them."

Sir Gordon has said — although Mr Hamilton denied it — that his behaviour fell well below the standards of an MP, he said. "That is clearly a long way from a finding of corruption or criminality", he said.

The hearing continues.

Prince cements reconciliation with Argentina

FROM ALAN HAMILTON IN BUENOS AIRES


DIEGO GIUDICE/AP
The Prince of Wales is greeted by well-wishers after laying a wreath at the Malvinas memorial to the Argentine dead

THE Prince of Wales launched into one of his most delicate diplomatic missions when he arrived in Buenos Aires yesterday for a three-day official visit to Argentina.

Avoiding any mention of the still disputed Falkland Islands, the Prince and Guido di Tella, Argentina's anglophile Foreign Minister, called in public speeches for a full return to the friendship between the two countries that had existed since the founding of the South American nation in the early 19th century.

At a wreath-laying ceremony at the ornate statue to José de San Martin, the country's national hero and liberator of much of the continent from its Spanish colonisers, the Prince told dignatories and a curious, friendly crowd of 300: "We are delighted by the steady rehabilitation of the close relationship that can and should exist between us."

Señor di Tella, who studied at St Antony's College, Oxford, told the Prince: "Your visit is a visit of reconciliation; it is very important to us. Your presence is a confirmation of a welcome trend that this country needed very badly." The closest Sènor di Tella came to referring to past difficulties was when he quoted from a poem, *The Rose*, by Argentina's greatest literary figure, Jorge Luis Borges. "I am not sure what it means, but it is about ambiguities and different paths to follow," he said.

The Prince had arrived at the city's airport to be greeted by the Foreign Minister and a guard of honour in tin-soldier uniforms. He then set off in a motorcade through the chaotic Italian-style traffic of Buenos Aires to his wreath-laying.

The Prince's car was provided with a mounted escort for which the traffic miraculously parted to allow him to get to the Casa Rosada, the Pink Palace seat of national power, from whose balcony all the country's leaders, from Eva Perón to General Galtieri, have declaimed to the crowd.

The Prince meeting President Menem yesterday

There, in the gilded and white marble Salon Blanco, he had a private meeting with President Menem and a photocall with three young Argentine footballers who will soon travel to England to train with Manchester United, thanks to a diplomatic mission by Sir Bobby Charlton.

The Prince passed on the Queen's best wishes and gave the President a silver and gold watch. President Menem, speaking fondly in Spanish of his visit to London last October, gave the Prince a picture of horses.

Later, the Prince laid a wreath at the Malvinas monument, a sombre memorial in a city park with some 700 names of the Argentine dead chiselled into black granite panels. His arrival was greeted by a military band playing the jaunty strains of *Colonel Bogey*, possibly an affectionate reference to the Prince being Colonel-in-Chief of the Welsh Guards and The Parachute Regiment, both heavily involved in the Falklands campaign.

A small crowd gathered to watch, held at bay by a strong police presence, but there were no demonstrations. The Prince walked up to the memorial accompanied by William Marsden, the British Ambassador. The plain green wreath said simply: "From HRH The Prince of Wales."

A few Argentine veterans lined up to meet the Prince. Commodore Leandro Gurina, who had been a young officer on the destroyer *Hercules* during the conflict, said later: "For me the Prince's visit is a very kind gesture. The important thing is to give respect to all the people who gave their lives. We look forward, not backwards; the future is one of more reconciliation."

Asked his view on who should have sovereignty over the islands, the commodore replied: "That is a political question; I will not answer."

Retired Surgeon-Captain Rick Jolly, the only British veteran present, approached Air Force Major Guillermo Dellepiane, who had been a Skyhawk pilot and had attacked *HMS Glasgow*. "You put a cannon shot through the blades of Commodore Simon Thornewill's helicopter," Captain Jolly said. "He sends his regards."

As the Prince left, a group of curious Argentinians began singing a song in Spanish, of which the only clear word was "Malvinas".

The Prince's visit, which follows the successful one by President Menem to London in October last year, is the British Government's way of signalling its approval for Señor Menem, who is due to retire from office later this year, and who, in ten years of office, has done much to rebuild Argentina's economy and to reinforce the country's return to democracy.

Under his presidency, the two countries have gradually rebuilt normal relations, and the issue of the Falkland Islands has been put to one side, although Argentina's claim to the islands remains enshrined in its constitution.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cook leak investigated by MPs

The leaking to Robin Cook of the report by MPs on the Sierra Leone affair is to be investigated by the Committee on Standards and Privileges.

The Commons committee agreed yesterday to investigate both the leak and whether the report should have been returned by the Foreign Secretary to its authors, the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs. Mr Cook and Ernie Ross, the MP who resigned from that committee after admitting leaking the report to the Foreign Secretary, are expected to be called to give evidence.

Mr Cook will be under pressure to say what use he made of the arms-to-Africa report, whether it influenced government responses and why he did not return it. Mr Ross could be disciplined. The report was highly critical of the Foreign Office but the Government responded dismissively.

Suspects' plea

Police have refused to support a request for rehousing by two men suspected of murdering Stephen Lawrence. The mother of Neil and Jamie Acourt, of Blackheath, South London, asked Greenwich council to move them because of threatening mail. It is understood that police decided the threat did not amount to harassment.

Allergy warning

An allergy expert told an inquest at Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, that many people allergic to nuts take a risk by eating out as food can be affected unwittingly. Steven Hall, 19, who was sensitive to peanuts, died after eating a restaurant curry, although he had asked for a nut-free dish. Verdict: accidental death.

Implant worries

More than 1,500 women have called a health department helpline after Trilucent breast implants, which contain soya oil, were withdrawn by the Government amid health fears. Up to 30 of the 5,000 women fitted with them have suffered reactions possibly linked to the implants leaking. The helpline number is 0800 004440.

James Major ill

James Major, the son of the former Prime Minister, was treated in hospital overnight after collapsing in the Met Bar, Central London, during a night out with his fiancée, Emma Noble. Tests showed he was suffering from postural hypotension, a blood circulation condition. He was discharged yesterday morning.

Surgery payout

A woman who had 84 operations to try to correct complications after a hysterectomy has accepted a six-figure payout. Jeanette Saunders, 45, of Cardiff, received the money in an out-of-court settlement from Bro Taf Health Authority. She said the hysterectomy in 1984 left her incontinent, and had affected her sons' upbringing.

Quiz win stays

A contestant on ITV's *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* whose wrong answer to a question was taken as the right one by Chris Tarrant, the host, will keep his £125,000 prize. The producers decided that Tony Kennedy, 29, a warehouseman from Blackpool, should not be punished for their mistake.

Primary lessons on civics cut

BY JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

EDUCATION ministers have settled a conflict with Downing Street over proposed lessons on citizenship. A compromise will limit compulsory lessons on the theme to secondary schools.

Tony Blair has been resisting proposals from David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, for two lessons a week from the age of five on citizenship topics, including debating, community service, Parliament and European monetary union.

Critics of the proposals, including Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, argued that the curriculum was too crowded. They were particularly sceptical of the plans for primary schools, where the curriculum has been reduced to accommodate literacy and numeracy hours. The compromise is likely to be announced next month.

Ulster leaders race to meet deadline

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

DAVID TRIMBLE and Gerry Adams began an intensive search for a resolution to the deadlock over IRA disarmament yesterday as the countdown to the new Good Friday deadline started.

The two old foes and their deputies met for 75 minutes at Stormont. There was no breakthrough, but Mr Trimble said that a "limited amount of progress" had been made and the Unionist and republican leaders agreed to meet again.

The British Government also intensified its search for progress. Paul Murphy, Northern Ireland Political Development Minister, summoned all the political parties to round-table talks tomorrow. Only Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party declined to attend.

On Monday Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, extended the deadline for establishing the Province's new executive from today until April 2, to give the parties "time and space" to resolve their differences. The IRA is refusing to start disarmament, and Mr Trimble is refusing to establish an executive that includes Sinn Fein until it does.

Mr Trimble, Northern Ireland's First Minister, was angered by Dr Mowlam's announcement because he felt that it eased pressure on Sinn Fein. He said, however, that he remained confident that the terrorists would ultimately begin disarmament because society was demanding it.

Mr Adams, Sinn Fein's president, described Dr Mowlam's announcement as a "mistake". He said the Good Friday accord imposed no pre-conditions on Sinn Fein's admission to government, and accused London and Dublin of capitulating to Unionist intransigence.

Party leaders will attend the St Patrick's Day festivities in Washington next week, but Mr Trimble and Mr Adams played down the prospect of President Clinton being able to broker a compromise.

Showman's 22p surprise

Continued from page 1

on spirits, wine and beer. But he did put 17.5p on a packet of 20 cigarettes and drivers will have to pay 4.25p more for a litre of leaded fuel and 3.79p more for unleaded. Diesel has gone up by 6.14p a litre.

The Chancellor pledged to reform the tax and benefits system to help families. The new children's tax credit to be introduced from April 2001 will mean the typical family with children will be over £200-a-year better off, according to Mr Brown.

Child benefit will be increased by "well above the rate of inflation", to £15-a-week for the first child from next April, he said with smaller rises for subsequent children.

"Support for children will be twice as high at the end of this parliament as it was at the beginning," he added. The children's tax credit, however, would be limited for higher rate taxpayers.

Every working family would be guaranteed a minimum income from November of £200-a-week, £10 more than previously announced, he said.

Mr Brown also promised an increased minimum income guarantee for the single pensioner of £78-a-week and for a couple of £121-a-week, with future increases linked not to prices but to earnings.

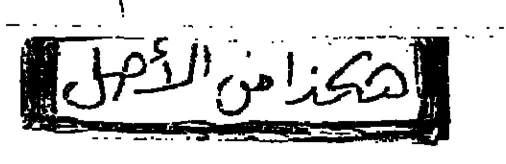
The Chancellor also announced changes to National Insurance payments designed to help people into work, bringing the lower starting limit down but increasing the upper limit in a move attacked by Tories swiftly as another "hit" on middle class workers. Mr Hague said the Government had already levied additional taxes of £1,500 for every taxpayer in the country.

While Mr Brown distributed a "few little goodies", he had already imposed for the current year "a huge rise in taxation".

He said of the Budget: "It is good for families who don't have a mortgage, who aren't married, who don't run a car, who don't smoke, who don't save for a pension.

"For a family like that it's fine. There may even be a family like that somewhere in the country."

Tory sources insisted some of the measures introduced would now hit "Sierra man", the mythical middle-income voter to whom Tony Blair believes Labour owes its election victory.





Jealous lover 'faked suicide pact to cover up murder'

Ex-soldier is accused of strangling model who laughed at the idea of marriage, reports Adrian Lee

A FORMER girlfriend of the Oasis singer Liam Gallagher was said to have been strangled by her possessive lover, who tried to hide the crime by inventing a suicide pact.

Kadamba Simmons, an actress and model who had also dated the boxer Prince Naseem Hamed, was about to have her first leading film role when she was murdered by Yaniv Malka, the Old Bailey was told.

Afterwards, the former Israeli Army soldier spent 90 minutes threatening to jump from a fifth-floor balcony and later claimed he had made other suicide attempts after helping his lover to take her own life. He had told police that she believed herself to be possessed by a witch and that they had agreed to commit suicide to end their problems.

The jury was told that the pact was a sham. Mr Malka, 22, was besotted by Miss Simmons, 24, but she had doubts about the relationship, which had begun when they met on holiday in Goa, India.

The naked body of Miss Simmons was found in the shower of a friend's flat in Islington, North London, on June 14 last year. The previous day Mr Malka had arrived in Britain, sweeping her into his arms at Waterloo Staton and stating that he intended to marry her.

David Waters, for the prosecution, said that, although Mr Malka was obsessed by Miss Simmons, she was merely fond of him. Exactly what was said and happened on the night of June 13 would never be known but, at some stage, Mr Malka realised that his lover's future life did not necessary involve him, he said.

They had a meal at a restaurant and returned to the flat. Mr Malka allegedly began to strangle Miss Simmons with his hands. Mr Waters said: "You will have to ask yourself if that was the moment when his hands and his mind were saying: 'If I can't have you, nobody else will.'"

Miss Simmons was dragged to the shower, where the killing was completed with a ligature, possibly a luggage strap, it was said.

In his account to police, Mr Malka said that he and Miss Simmons had talked of joint suicide in Germany, where they had travelled after leaving Goa. In his version of



Malka: became besotted after romance in Goa

events, she had used a rope, containing two nooses, to hang herself. When she was dead he had used clothes, a luggage strap, knives, pills and bleach to try to complete his side of the agreement. The court was told that the flat was covered in his blood.

Next morning, he took a taxi to University College in Central London, where he climbed to the fifth floor and threatened to jump to his death.

Mr Waters said: "All these efforts failed and, you see, failed rather miserably ... Although that flat had every appearance of his having tried [to commit suicide], he seems to have done himself little damage, just enough to spread blood."

Mr Malka denies murder, but admits assisting Miss Simmons to commit suicide. The jury was told he could be convicted of manslaughter if it was found there was a pact.

Mr Waters said that Miss Simmons had every reason to live. "She was by all accounts a very beautiful woman. She moved in the pop music and film world. To all who knew her it seemed she displayed an tremendous zest for life and she was very popular."

Miss Simmons had given no indication to friends, who spoke to her on the night of her death, that she was contemplating suicide. In fact, Mr Waters said, the following month she was to travel to South Africa to star in a film for £30,000.

Sarah Smith, an immigration official who questioned Mr Malka when he arrived on a Eurostar train from Brussels, said that he had told her that Miss Simmons was going to be his wife. Mrs Smith, who also spoke to Miss Simmons, said that she had laughed at the idea of marriage.

She had told the official that, although she had believed in Goa that she was in love with Mr Malka, she was now not sure that it had been any more than a holiday romance. Mr Malka's stay in Britain was to have been the test for that. Mrs Smith described how the couple embraced at the terminal: "He literally swept her off her feet," she said. "She was a little embarrassed."

The hearing continues.



Kadamba Simmons: she was about to have her first leading film role

Man who spurned Jagger ends up satisfied

By Susie Steiner

IN 1963 a drummer made what some might see as an bad decision — although today Carlo Little himself is happy enough. After a few gigs with a struggling band called the Rolling Stones, he reckoned he had no future in rock 'n' roll.

"I was a professional musician and it didn't seem worthwhile. They had a gig here and there but nothing substantial," he said. The band went on to perform at Wembley Stadium. Mr Little went on to run a burger stand in the grounds.

Tonight television viewers will see him meet the Stones for the first time in 35 years, at a gig. Yesterday the 60-year-old caterer, who has been married for 31 years, with two children and a grand-daughter, said: "I suppose you could say it's worked out quite well for them. But I have a nice lifestyle with my wife Iris.

"There are no hard feelings and I'm delighted for all of them. At least I don't have to put up with all of the problems that go with fame and fortune."

Mr Little had been a session musician with the Cyril Davies All Star band when he worked with the Stones. "I played about four gigs with them but it only paid a couple of quid a time," he said. "Brian Jones begged me to stay, but I couldn't — it wasn't enough." He recommended a friend — Charlie Watts.

Last summer Mr Little had a glimpse of the rock star's lifestyle, at the Stones gig in Paris. "When they started to play *Satisfaction* the place went wild," he said. "I must say, it gave me quite a buzz. It must be quite something to have that effect on people."

Mr Little was then invited to Mick Jagger's birthday party. "It was like being with old friends."

☐ The reunion can be seen on *UK Raw*, on Channel 5 at 11.30pm tonight.

Family fight over Aboriginal man's body



Milton: wants daughter to be able to visit grave

By Christine Middap

THE body of an Aboriginal man who was taken from his Australian mother at birth and adopted by an English couple was at the centre of a High Court battle yesterday.

Dayne Childs, 26, has lain in a Norwich morgue since July because his two families on opposite sides of the world cannot agree on his funeral. His adoptive mother, Annette Childs, and his girlfriend, Kirsten Milton, the mother of his daughter, wanted him cremated in his home city of Norwich after his death in a road accident. His biological mother, the Aboriginal activist Cheryl Buchanan, says his spirit can rest only if he is buried in his homeland.

Mr Childs was taken from his mother at birth, in circumstances that are unclear, and adopted by Mr and Mrs Childs as a toddler. Known as Illych Branfield in Australia, he was reunited with his Aboriginal family in 1996. He became a symbol of the "stolen generation", the thousands of Aboriginal children forcibly taken from their families by the Government until 1970. David Truex, solicitor for Ms Buchanan, said his client felt that Mr and Mrs Childs had done a fine job in raising Dayne. "But she says to me, 'They had him in life, can't we have his spirit in death?'"

Mrs Childs, who did not attend court, told an Australian newspaper: "We are devastated that Dayne has been prevented from having the funeral he would have wanted."

The family are concerned that his daughter, Hollie, 2, should be able to visit his grave. Ms Milton attended court yesterday but left in tears and refused to comment.

Also in court was Mr Childs' biological grandmother, Ponjydfljydu, and her partner, Gnarnayarrahe Waitari. They found Mr Childs in England in 1996. Ponjydfljydu returned upon his death and has refused to leave unless she can take his body home.

Mr Truex said there were no precedents in England or Australia for the case. The hearing in the Family Division of the High Court in London was adjourned until May 11.



Ponjydfljydu: refuses to leave without body

'Mean' father wins share of cash payout for son's death

By Russell Jenkins

A MOTHER yesterday described her former husband as "Britain's meanest father" after he successfully pursued her for a share of the £10,000 compensation payout she won after their teenage son died in a road accident.

Debrah High, 39, from Methley, near Leeds, was ordered by a judge at Blackpool County Court to pay £4,100 to the man that she says abandoned her 17 years ago, leaving her to bring up their two young children on her own.

Outside the court, she said: "I am absolutely devastated. He does not deserve a penny."

Mrs High, a photographic laboratory worker, said that David Muscroft, 44, an unemployed comedian, had left her and their children, Jason and Samantha, to become a Butlins Redcoat. She said that he had paid little maintenance and visited the children only twice a year.

When Jason died, aged 17, in a car accident five years ago, his mother launched a three-year legal battle against Leeds City Council, eventually winning a £10,000 settlement.

The teenager was killed when the car in which he was travelling skidded out of control on loose chippings on a recently resurfaced road near Pontefract and crashed into a bus shelter.

Police told the subsequent inquest that driving on such a



Jason Muscroft: died in a car accident aged 17

surface was like "driving on marbles". The coroner recorded a verdict of unlawful killing.

The council and the road contractors later appealed successfully against the inquest verdict, which was reduced to accidental death.

On her solicitor's advice, Mrs High accepted a £10,000 out-of-court settlement from the council. Mr Muscroft's award of £4,100 includes £900 that he spent on the teenager's funeral.

Mrs High, who has remarried, said: "He was not a father to Jason. He did nothing for him. He has hurt so many people. I cannot believe we have to give him the money back for the funeral. I hope it haunts him."

David Aird, Mr Muscroft's solicitor, said that Mrs High



Jason's mother, Debrah High, who must share payout

had actually pursued the original claim on behalf of Mr Muscroft, herself and her present husband.

"All of this could have been prevented if Mrs High had agreed with the arrangements that were reached in the original proceedings. But she has not given him a penny of it," he said.

Mr Muscroft insisted that he had been a good father to his children. "I didn't want this to happen," he said. "It could all have been avoided."

John High, who became Jason's stepfather, said: "There is no way I would ask my wife for the money back from my son's own funeral. What father on Earth could do that? It is disgusting."

Judge Robert Foster ruled that Mrs High must pay the money within two weeks.

Restraint is Galliano's totem at Dior

From Lisa Armstrong
Fashion Editor, in Paris

LAST season John Galliano trawled through Red Star China and the Soviet Union for the most deluxe take on Mao suits and Bolshevik chic. This time, under the inscrutable gaze of his boss, Bernard Arnault, he went to Africa. But it was a restrained trip.

Under the new reign of austerity at Dior, the props were confined to a few totem poles planted into a silver-leaf catwalk and the odd doleful-looking wooden mask festooning the rococo mirrors (austerity being relative in Paris couture houses).

This was Africa by way of Modigliani — cue lots of those lean, languid, Wallis Simpson silhouettes that Galliano has been exploring for some time, and his favourite Edwardian suits, perhaps as a nod to *Out Of Africa*. The best of these were punched from camel suede or stretchy rust-coloured knits. Many were obscured by the enormous back-to front cable knit cardigans that were slipped on top of everything, including some of the evening wear, giving the flared, A-line treatment that so many other designers have bestowed on skirts, to the top half of the body, leaving the lower half pencil slim. It was one of those silhouettes that looks striking on six foot models — and few others

Some of the outsize, square-shaped sloppy jumpers had an Eighties feel to them. But they probably won't change the direction of fashion.

Photograph, page 28

'They are the vandals of the nineties... the graffiti artists of this decade'
JOANNA COLES IN NEW YORK
on zero tolerance for dogs, page 23

Sussex police chief suspended over raid

Shooting of unarmed suspect leads to charges, reports **Stewart Tendler**

THE Chief Constable of Sussex Police was suspended from duty yesterday over a raid in which an unarmed suspect was shot.

Paul Whitehouse, 53, was abroad on holiday when the decision was announced by his police authority and the Police Complaints Authority. Mark Jordan, his deputy, has already been suspended over the case and both men face disciplinary charges.

The suspension of the top two officers in a modern force is unprecedented. Day-to-day control of the 3,000-strong force will pass to assistant chief constables who will be overseen by a Home Office Inspector of Constabulary.

Mr Whitehouse, a Cambridge graduate who has been Chief Constable for five years, was suspended over claims that he made misleading comments about the death in January last year of James Ashley during an operation involving allegations of drug dealing and an attempted murder.

Mr Ashley, 39, was killed in his flat in Hastings at 4am by a single shot. He had a conviction for manslaughter. Police later found a small amount of cannabis and an air weapon.

Mr Whitehouse said afterwards that he supported the police operation and was satisfied that it had been properly planned. The use of firearms was justified and officers acted properly, he said.

It was also claimed that Mr Ashley had not been involved in an attempted murder during a fight but had acted to stop serious injuries.

Mr Jordan authorised the raid and four other officers involved with the tactical firearms group, including the constable who opened fire, have also been relieved from duty.

Kent police were called in to examine the raid and later Sir John Hoddinott, the Chief Constable of Hampshire, was asked to investigate the role of senior officers. He interviewed Mr Whitehouse last year.

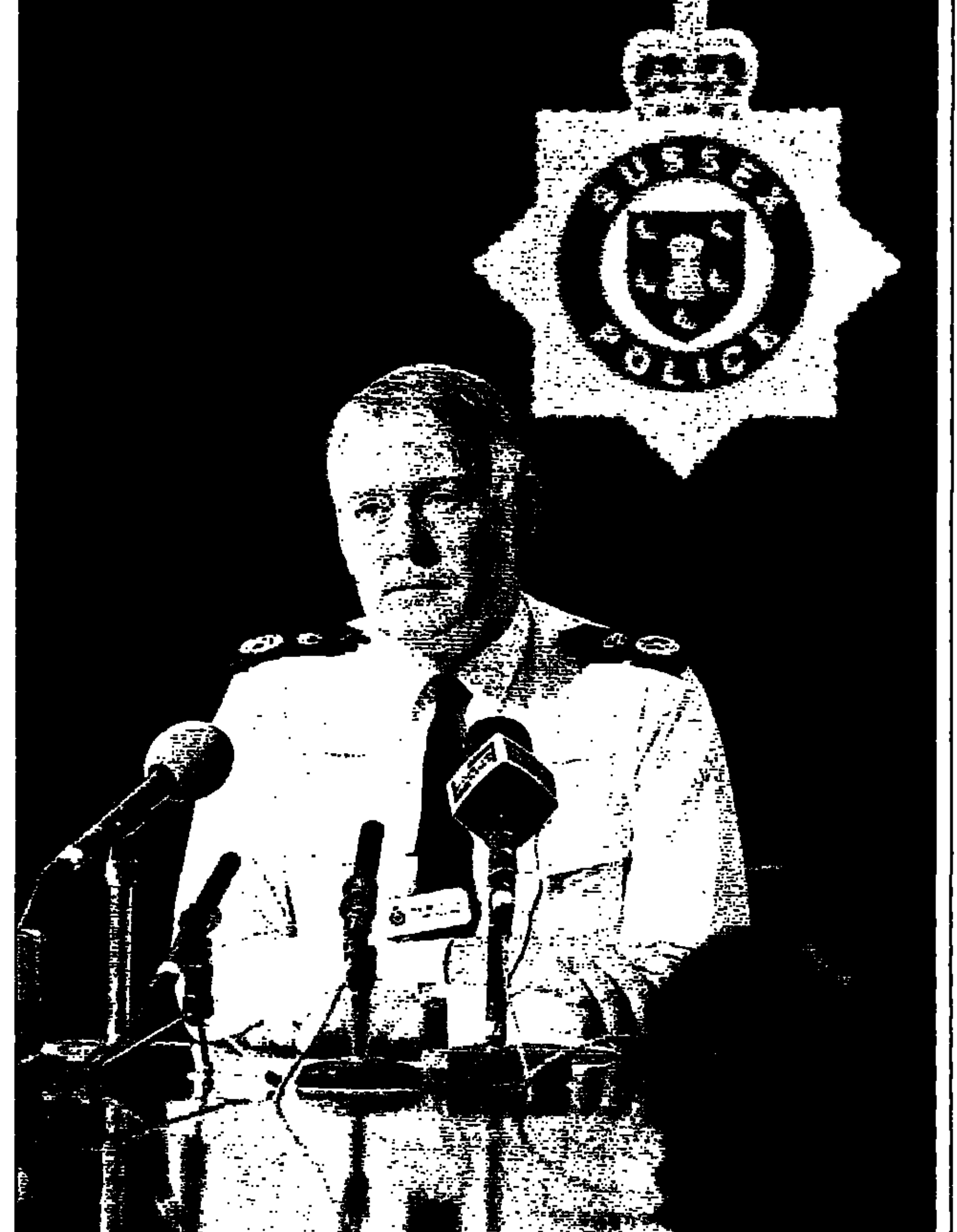
Two reports from the investigations were considered by the Sussex police authority which then announced that disciplinary charges would be brought against Mr Whitehouse and Mr Jordan later this month.

Last night the Sussex police authority said that Tony Lake, one of the assistant chief constables, had been made Deputy Chief Constable designate and would run the force.

Mr Whitehouse is expected to contest any charges. Noted as a reforming officer, he has been mentioned as a possible candidate to head the Metropolitan Police.

He read economics at Cambridge University and once in the police, rose rapidly. He was a superintendent by the time he was 30 and became assistant chief constable of Greater Manchester.

He moved to West Yorkshire as Deputy Chief Constable and in Sussex maintained a reforming profile. He refused to sign a performance-related pay contract and lost a bonus of £12,000 because he opposed the idea of rewards for individuals.



Paul Whitehouse: alleged to have made misleading comments about suspect's death

OFFICER SACKED FOR WRITING RACIST GRAFFITI

Scotland Yard has sacked a police constable for writing racist graffiti on a poster in a station in North London (Stewart Tendler writes). At a conference yesterday to encourage Asian recruits, Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, said that he would not tolerate racism. Disciplinary powers that come into force next month will make it easier to sack officers.

The officer, thought to be one of the first in the Metropolitan Police to lose his job over racism, was dismissed for misconduct after he wrote a comment on a poster for blood donors. He later claimed it had been a joke.

Sir Paul also cited the case of a sergeant who was demoted to constable for misconduct after making racist comments. At least four other officers, including a chief inspector and an inspector, are also under investigation.

Scotland Yard is offering 70 scholarships to black and Asian students. Sir Paul said that the scholarships would be offered over the second and third years of a student's study. Officials hope that at least 20 will then join the Yard as police officers or civilian staff.

Details and the value of the scholarships are still being drawn up with a company that runs similar schemes for the Civil Service, Shell and the Prison Service.

Yesterday Sir Paul assured Asian community leaders that he intends to reach nearly 1,000 officers from ethnic minority backgrounds by April next year. He has told the force he wants an extra 80 black, Asian or Chinese officers on top of nearly 900 already in the force.

There are 600,000 Asians living in London but the Metropolitan Police has 294 officers with Asian backgrounds out of 26,000 officers.

Hit-and-run victim is told to fight own case

By Arthur Leathley
Transport Correspondent

A BUSINESSMAN injured by a hit-and-run driver has been told by police to fight the case himself, although they admit having enough evidence to prosecute. They told Max Lehrain it was "not in the public interest" to prosecute the motorist who sped off after knocking him off his motorcycle.

Instead, the Metropolitan Police offered copies of their reports into the accident to help Mr Lehrain to bring his own private action or to support an insurance claim. They also gave him the name and address of the car driver. Failure to report an accident carries a maximum penalty of £5,000 or a six-month prison sentence.

Mr Lehrain, who runs a London finance company, was taken to hospital with minor head and rib injuries after the accident in Kennington, South London. He said that he was "flabbergasted" by the police decision. "We are always being told that failing to report an accident is a serious offence and then the police do nothing about it even when they have evidence."

The Metropolitan Police said: "The decision to pursue a case is often quite complex and involves a number of issues such as the quality of witness statements and the resources we have available."

Poirot's grey cells exercised on TV

By Carol Midgley
Media Correspondent

TWO new films based on Agatha Christie novels are to be made for British television, starring David Suchet as the Belgian detective Hercule Poirot.

Lord Edgware Dies and *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, one of Christie's most critically acclaimed books, will be broadcast in the UK at the end of the year and distributed to the American networks.

Chorion plc, which last year bought the intellectual property rights to all of Christie's works for £10 million, announced that it was investing a "substantial" sum into the production budget of £3.5 million.

The company said that it was anxious to keep control of all television, publishing and licensing deals to maximise its profits and strengthen the Christie brand.

Christie remains the world's bestselling author, having sold 2 billion books in more than 50 languages. During her lifetime she was outsold only by the Bible and Shakespeare.

John Conlon, Chorion's chairman, said: "Agatha Christie is one of the world's best-loved and widely read authors and it is our plan to build upon this popularity and renown by commissioning more productions based on her works."

The films will be made by Carnival Films. Since 1989 Carnival and LWT have produced 42 Poirot episodes, which have sold in 44 countries with revenues of £15 million.

☐ ITV claimed an early victory in the tea-time new battle on Monday. Unofficial figures showed that 7.3 million viewers tuned in for the new *ITV Evening News* programme hosted by Trevor McDonald at 6.30pm. Its forerunner, a 5.40pm bulletin, had attracted an average of 4 million. The BBC's *Six O'Clock News*, which has consistently been the country's most popular news programme, pulled in 6.5 million viewers.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Six held as police storm tower block

Police stormed a tower block after colleagues were bombarded with bricks, bottles, knives and a television. West Midlands Police sent officers in protective vests into the nine-storey block in Tipton after a shot was fired from an airgun. The area was cordoned off and armed officers placed on standby before uniformed police went in and arrested six people.

Baby whale dies

A baby whale died after being washed up near Clacton, Essex. The 12ft minke had become separated from its mother. RSPCA staff and a divers' marine rescue unit kept it wet but a coastguard spokesman said: "It could not be saved."

Unlucky break

James Stones, 12, who had just been picked from 300 hopefuls to join a child modelling agency, suffered facial cuts and a broken jaw when he was struck by a hit-and-run lorry driver at Thurnscoe, South Yorkshire.

Swan shooter

An angler who shot and killed a cygnet that was spoiling his day's fishing has admitted a charge of criminal damage to the bird. Teeside magistrates ordered Lee Standbra, 21, of Billingham, Cleveland, to forfeit his air rifle.

Queen burgled

Two historic barns on the Queen's estate at Sandringham, Norfolk, have been stripped of their roofs by thieves. The gang escaped with 500 clay tiles worth £1,500 from the buildings, which were due to be restored.

Cat on a hot roof

A stray cat was found clinging to a car shell after going through a paint-baking oven at 145F at the Peugeot plant in Ryton-on-Dunsmore, near Coventry. The RSPCA treated it for burnt paws and shock.

Star mission leaks £22m into space

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

A MISSION to study the formation of galaxies, costing £22 million, has been written off after its supply of coolant leaked into space.

WIRE, the Wide-Field Infrared Explorer, was launched last Thursday by Nasa, the US space agency. It is a small, low-cost satellite fitted with an infrared telescope cooled to -260C and designed to study the process of star formation.

Soon after launch, the spacecraft began to spin. Controllers believe that the telescope cover was released early, allowing the Sun to shine directly on to the frozen hydrogen coolant. This caused the hydrogen to vaporise and vent into space, spinning the spacecraft. Controllers have managed to slow the rate of spin, but the entire hydrogen supply has gone, meaning that the telescope will not work.

"We are very disappointed," Ed Weiler, Associate Administrator for Space Science at Nasa, said. "We are establishing a formal anomaly investigation board to help us to plan future missions."

Villages put on alert for worst flood levels

Paul Wilkinson reports on the mayhem caused by relentless rainfall and melting snow

HUNDREDS of riverside householders near York were preparing last night for their highest flood levels this century.

Red alerts were issued to villages yesterday as a huge surge flowed down the River Derwent. Millions of gallons of water, swollen by melting snow and six inches of rain on the North York Moors, have already burst the river's bank upstream at Malton, causing extensive damage.

Yesterday the focus of attention moved down-river as workers from the Environment Agency toured the lower Derwent Valley, warning home-owners and businesses to prepare for the worst. Work on a flood protection scheme for Stamford Bridge, funded by the Environment Agency, was to have begun last year, but a start was postponed until next year.

The agency has been accused by people in Stamford Bridge of not giving out adequate warnings but a spokesman said that a series of alerts, of increasing severity, had been issued in recent days.

The disaster has led a local MP to suggest that help from the Government might be needed. John Greenway, the Conservative MP for Ryedale, whose constituency office in Malton is flooded, said: "It's the worst disaster in most townspeople's memory. I feel so sorry for the families and businesses affected. It's awful."

Peter Long, who owns a petrol station and shop in Stamford Bridge, said: "I've lived here for 40 years but have never seen anything like this." He has spent three days at his shop trying to limit flood damage. All his Mother's Day cards have been lost.

The Environment Agency reported that at Malton the river had peaked early yesterday at more that 10ft above its normal level, topping the previous highest level set in 1931. Helen Grayson, of the agency's flood team, said: "This is all happening because of the shape of the land. It's a shallow bowl so although nothing's holding the water up, it just takes a long time to make its way down. If you were filling a bath with the taps on full blast, even with the plug pulled out, it would continue to fill up. It's the same situation here."

Her team will be on standby as the water makes its way down the Derwent to its confluence with the River Ouse at Barmby tidal barrage.

The agency has distributed sandbags to homes, and council workmen have been taken off refuse collections to help to protect homes and businesses.

In Malton and neighbouring Norton more than 100 families had to quit their waterlogged homes; most took refuge with relatives or friends. North Yorkshire County Council set up refuges in Malton's two secondary schools which had closed because pupils could not get there.

Malton and Norton are normally only separated by a bridge across the Derwent, but yesterday motorists were making a 12-mile detour. The A169 between Malton and Pickering and the A166 from York to the east coast was blocked at Stamford Bridge. Many minor roads were also shut and rail services between Scarborough and York were suspended because of track flooding at Malton station.

Telephone lines throughout the area were out of action.

At Stamford Bridge, police complained that families were visiting the village to see the floods. Some were even letting their children paddle in the rising water. A force spokesman said: "This is particularly dangerous: the Derwent is fast-flowing and very deep."

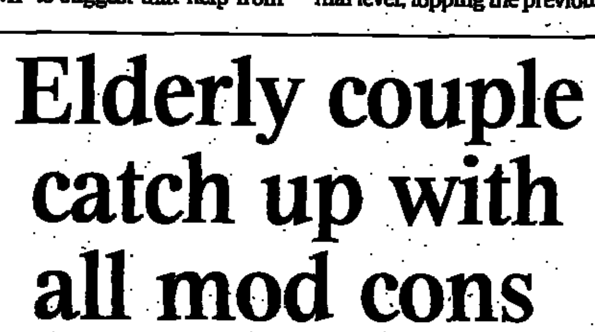
In Malton the river set a high on Monday of 18.7 metres, 100 cm above the previous highest in 1931. At Stamford Bridge, where the previous highest level of 9.57 metres was reached in 1947, it was 9.74 metres yesterday.

The Environment Agency has set up an information line on the floods, on 0645 881188.

ROSS PARRY



The scene in Norton and Malton, North Yorkshire, yesterday after the River Derwent burst its banks. Many families had to abandon their homes



Elderly couple catch up with all mod cons

By Helen Johnstone

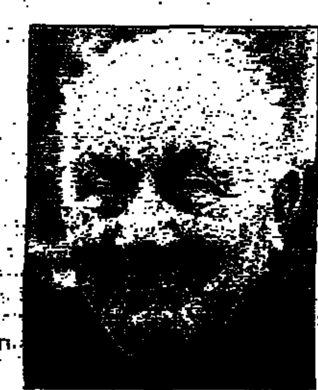
AN ELDERLY couple who have lived for more than 40 years without gas, electricity or running water are to receive £40,000 worth of home improvements after being discovered by their local council.

An open stove in the kitchen doubled as a cooker and the main source of heat for Albert and Grace Juttus. Three oil-lamps lit the two-bedroom property. They ate home-grown vegetables and washed in and drank water from a natural spring in the garden of their home near Shenton, Leicestershire.

Mr and Mrs Juttus used a Second World War army motorcycle and sidecar to travel to nearby shops to buy the few things that they could not grow or rear.

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, in its biggest renovation grant, will install running water, gas central heating and electricity, as well as a lavatory, shower room and double-glazed windows in their bungalow. There will also be new doors, new floorboards and a renovation of garden and outbuildings.

A council official stumbled upon their humble existence after Mr Juttus, 73, contacted it for help to dig a well. The former agricultural worker, who fled to Britain from Estonia in 1947, said: "We have never had very much but we have always had each other, and that's all we ever wanted."



Albert Juttus: we only ever wanted each other

Mrs Juttus, 72, a former potato picker who now has mobility problems, is staying at a nursing home while the work is done, forcing the couple to live apart for the first time since they were married 43 years ago.

The couple, who have no family, did not realise that they were entitled to grant aid to improve their property. Mr Juttus, who used to make furniture out of old floorboards, said: "We never wanted handouts. We don't take charity. We've paid for what we've needed out of our own pockets and that's always been the best way.

"We are looking forward to the electricity and gas. It will make us more comfortable bit it won't change us."





The bungalow that is to get a £40,000 renovation

Monica and the Morse mystery

By Elizabeth Judge

MOTIVES were mixed yesterday as 1,000 people queued for the latest Monica Lewinsky book-signing. Among them was Colin Dexter, author of the Inspector Morse novels.

He said: "I think she is very fresh-faced, young and attractive, and I wish her well." He presented her with a copy of his book, *Morse's Greatest Mystery*, in which he had written: "Good luck, I wish I was 45 years younger."

Others buying *Monica's Story* at Borders bookshop in Oxford Street, London, had different views. Nicole Corica, 21, said: "It's so exciting to meet her but I don't know what to say to her. I can't exactly say, 'I like your work'. I can understand why she went for Clinton. Power is so attractive."

Damion Cook, 30, said: "I'm only here because of the novelty of it. She is a boring person and the whole affair was very sordid but it is an historical event that you feel you should take part in."

David Kagan, an American student, said: "She she was treated badly by the Government and the media. I want to show her I'm on her side."

School nurses want to provide emergency Pill

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

SCHOOL nurses should be authorised to hand out the morning-after contraceptive pill and give family planning advice to all children in secondary schools, including the under-16s, the Royal College of Nursing agreed yesterday.

Backing a call to end inequalities in the health care of adolescents, delegates at the annual congress in Harrogate were told that the number of school nurses was being cut although young people increasingly wanted confidential advice on intimate problems.

Jane Naish, the college's community health adviser, said that there were only 4,000 school nurses in the state sector and that they were overwhelmed with requests from teenagers for help about stress, contraception, sexual health, family relationships and sexual identity. "At the least nurses should be able to provide contraception and emergency contraception," she said. "We would like to have new powers to prescribe them, although nurses who did this would obviously have to be competent and properly trained."

Miss Naish said that ideally a school should have at least one visit a week from a school nurse and there should be posters giving advice on where girls could obtain emergency contraception at times when the nurse was not available.

Miss Naish said that school nurses were ideally placed to provide good education that would cut the level of promiscuity among younger children. In countries such as Holland, where sex education is an important part of the curriculum, the average age for teenagers having sex for the first time was 18, a year older than in Britain, which has the second highest teenage pregnancy rate in the developed world.

Sexual diseases are also spreading rapidly in Britain, with about 100,000 new cases of chlamydia, an infection that can cause infertility, each year.

Victoria Gillick, the anti-abortion family campaigner, said that she was appalled by the nurses' resolution. "It seems the adult world has given up on the young," she said. Nuala Scarisbrook, of the anti-abortion group Life, said the idea was "grossly irresponsible". No responsible parents would want their child to go to school "and be kitted out for underage sex".

The British Pregnancy Advisory Service and the Family Planning Association supported the idea of school nurses being able to prescribe emergency and normal contraceptives.

PAUL BARKER



Jane Naish: said that the 4,000 school nurses are overwhelmed with requests for help

Smoking a 'slow suicide'

A DENTAL technician who spent 20 years making dentures for oral cancer patients will today tell nurses who smoke that they are committing slow suicide. Peter Cooke, 39, had smoked 15 cigarettes a day for 25 years when oral cancer was diagnosed 14 months ago (Ian Murray writes).

"I knew the dangers but I always thought it would happen to somebody else," he said. "Working for the NHS is stressful and it is easy to see why nurses smoke, but if they do there is every chance that they will become patients themselves."

The Royal College of Nursing is helping the 21 per cent of nurses who smoke to give up. They are to be given a week's supply, worth £20, of nicotine replacement patches or gum.

Mr Cooke said that when he was told he had oral cancer, the first thing he wanted was a cigarette. "It is very difficult to give up but it really isn't worth it," he said. "Throw your fags away, not your life."

Doctors back the right to refuse blood

By Helen Rumbelow

JEHOVAH'S Witnesses will be allowed to die if they refuse blood transfusions, doctors agreed yesterday.

Guidelines have been announced to try to end the confusion surrounding the treatment of Britain's 145,000 Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe that accepting another person's blood is a sin because certain passages in the Bible forbid the consumption of blood. Anaesthetists, who administer blood transfusions, had been torn between their duty to save lives and respecting the wishes of their patients.

Now a report from the Association of Anaesthetists, which represents the majority of anaesthetists in Britain, said that they should not intervene without consent. To administer blood to a patient who has steadfastly refused to accept it is "unlawful, ethically unacceptable and may lead to criminal and or civil proceedings", the report said.

Jehovah's Witnesses, who were consulted during the drafting of the guidelines, have been asked to carry identification cards in case they are unconscious when the decision has to be made, or to make "living wills" about directions for treatment.

In return, doctors are asked to take every precaution to avoid blood loss when operating on Jehovah's Witnesses, and to consult the senior anaesthetist to determine whether a transfusion would be crucial. The report said that doctors should plan treatment of children well in advance, consult parents and allow enough time to apply to the courts if necessary.

"Administering blood to a Jehovah's Witness without consent has been likened by the movement to rape," Michael Ward, one of the authors of the report, said. "It would not result in expulsion from the community, but would have a deep psychological effect."

Tony Brace, the hospital information co-ordinator for Jehovah's Witnesses in Britain, said that the guidelines clarified a sometimes fraught standoff with the medical profession. "We don't know why they describe them as 'right to die' guidelines; we see it as a chance for patients to get the best chance to live. But otherwise the guidelines are really very helpful," he said.

"It is very simple why we don't agree to take blood products. We are told repeatedly in the Bible not to take blood into the body."

DEADLY MISTAKES

The number of patients being given the wrong type of blood rose by a quarter last year, causing two deaths and 20 cases of serious injury, according to a report published yesterday.

Serious Hazards of Transfusion, the watchdog on the use of blood products, reported that 110 people were given the wrong blood last year, compared with 81 in 1997. The mistakes were mostly as a result of careless checking of patient records, the report said. It called for computerised patient identification systems to be introduced.

Leap in 'senile delinquency' as population ages

By Alexandra Frean, Social Affairs Correspondent

AN INCREASING number of elderly people are turning to crime, according to research.

The rise of a new class of "senile delinquents" is identified in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*. It discloses that, as the population ages, the number of offences committed by pensioners with previously blameless lives is increasing.

Graeme Yorston, author of the research and a psychiatrist with Lanarkshire Healthcare Trust in Scotland, said that it was only natural that the increase in the number of elderly people suffering from mental health problems such as dementia and depression *should result in a rise in* antisocial behaviour.

Prison Service statistics show that the proportion of convicted prisoners aged 60 or over rose from 1 per cent in 1990 to 1.7 per cent in 1997, when there were 80 of them.

Dr Yorston said, however, that the extent of crime by first-time elderly offenders was far higher, not least because of police reluctance to arrest the elderly for anything but the most serious crimes.

Although homicide among the elderly is not common, accounting for 1 to 4 per cent of the total, it does tend to follow a distinct pattern. Psychiatrists have coined the term "Darby and Joan syndrome" to describe elderly spouse homicides. These occur with no warning, are characterised by repeated blows to the head with a blunt object and are often followed by suicide.

Dr Yorston said: "In nursing homes, one patient might assault another, but no one will report it because those involved are old. If they were 30 years younger the case would probably go to court."

Some types of dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease, can lead to increased irritability and aggression in 30 to 50 per cent of patients. Other forms of the illness, such as frontal lobe demen*tia, can affect sufferers'* judgment and cause them to lose their inhibitions or to become reckless.

Shoplifting is the most common crime among elderly offenders, accounting for an estimated 80 per cent of cases. Violence features in only 10 per cent.

Dr Yorston wants the authorities here to take similar action to those in America, where special prison accommodation and court diversion programmes are available.

☐ Tougher prison sentences fail to act as a deterrent to criminals because most do not hear or read about them, researchers at Cambridge University's Institute of Criminology say.

£75,000 paid over fatal Down's test

By Paul Wilkinson, North East Correspondent

THE parents of a child who died after a test for Down's syndrome went wrong have received a £75,000 out-of-court payment from the health authority responsible.

The settlement ends an eight-year campaign by Dawn and Terry Parnell whose daughter Mishka had a needle inserted into her brain while in the womb.

She was born in February 1991 blind, deaf and severely brain-damaged, and died 2½ years later. An inquest in 1995 ruled that she died from natural causes.

In the following year, however, an independent inquiry into the obstetrics and gynaecology department at Grimsby Hospital, Lincolnshire, where three women died and two babies were stillborn, found errors, misjudgments and ineptitude. Michael Muldoon, the consultant in charge of the unit, was accused of failing to supervise his juniors, poor communication and a lack of leadership in specific cases. He retired during the investigation.

The inquiry found that a test on Mrs Parnell, in which a needle was inserted into her womb to draw off for analysis a sample of amniotic fluid, had been carried out without an ultrasound scanner to check the baby's position.

South Humberside Health Authority initially denied that the test was the cause of Mishka's brain damage. Mrs Parnell, 46, and her husband began a court action and last November the health authority admitted responsibility.

IT'S ILLEGAL TO BE GAY IN TWENTY STATES IN THE U.S.A.



TONIGHT AT 10.30PM

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

1. Get all gay people to move somewhere else?
2. Get action from Congress, if they can take time off from their own sex scandals?
3. Get The Gay Team aboard their big pink love bus and show these states just how much fun illegal sex can be.

MICHAEL MOORE: THE AWFUL TRUTH

SERIOUS COMEDY

Censure test for territory's law chief

From Jill McGivering in Hong Kong

LEGISLATORS in Hong Kong will debate a motion of no confidence today in Elsie Leung, the Secretary for Justice.

Ms Leung is the first senior official to face such a move since the former colony was returned to Chinese rule and comes amid growing concern about confidence in the rule of law, seen by many as a guarantee of Hong Kong's basic freedoms.

The move follows a series of controversial legal decisions, including a Court of Final Appeal ruling that extended the right of abode in the territory to thousands of mainland Chinese children.

☐ Beijing: China has detained Wang Lixiong, one of the country's best-known writers, for allegedly revealing state secrets, a Hong Kong human rights group said yesterday.

Suspected spy kept job at US secret arms lab

By Damian Whitworth in Washington

A SCIENTIST working at the Los Alamos top-secret nuclear laboratory has been dismissed as one of the biggest spy rows since the Cold War engulfed the Clinton Administration.

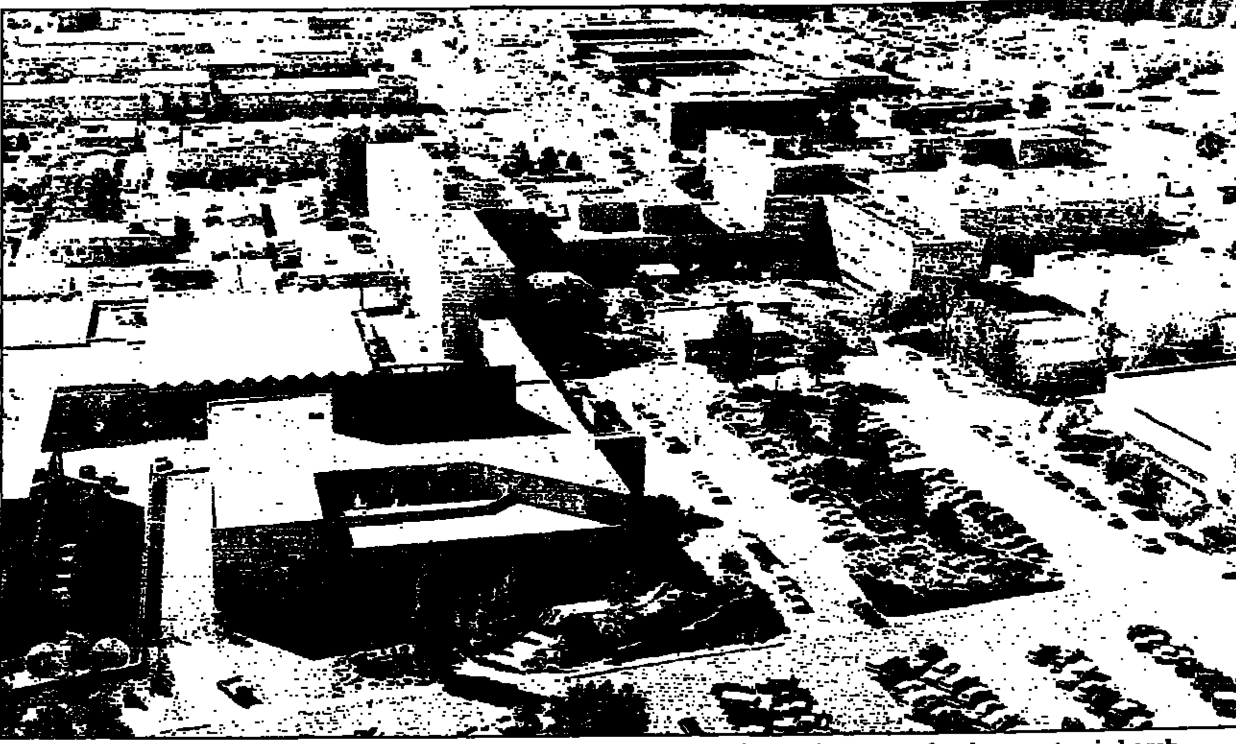
An investigation continued yesterday into allegations that classified information about America's most advanced nuclear weapons had been passed to China, allowing it to leap a generation in the production of its own arsenal.

It appeared there was not enough evidence to charge Wen Ho Lee, the scientist, and the Government came under attack for refusing to act more swiftly once it became clear secrets had been stolen. He has been the focus of FBI scrutiny for nearly three years after intelligence agents realised China had apparently obtained design information in the 1980s about warhead technology. He was said to have failed a lie-detector test, and was interviewed as recently as last week. He was fired after weekend reports linking leaked secrets and a scientist.


Los Alamos sprawls over three mountains

Mr Lee, from Taiwan and in his late fifties, had worked at Los Alamos — hidden in New Mexico's remote Rockies — for at least 12 years with top security clearance. He lost his job for "failing to properly safeguard classified material", having contact with people "from a sensitive country" and "apparently attempting to deceive [the] laboratory about security-related issues," the Energy Department said. His failure to co-operate meant there was no prosecution evidence.

China has denied that Mr Lee passed secrets or that it received information. Suspicions arose in 1995 when it became clear that China had gained a key component of a modern arsenal by producing small warheads that could be launched from a single missile — allowing multiple targeting. Intelligence officials uncovered a Chinese document, written in 1988, indicating knowledge of information about the US W88 miniature warhead.


Los Alamos was set up in 1942 to house the secret Manhattan Project — the race to develop an atomic bomb

Republican Congressional leaders have promised hearings on why the Clinton Administration did not react more quickly over the spying amid accusations that the White House was lax because it was trying to build a better relationship with China. Also, after the 1996 election, the Administration was accused of receiving illegal Chinese campaign contributions.

Senator Richard Shelby said that his Intelligence Committee planned hearings, adding: "We've been prodding the Administration to do more to tighten up security."

Bill Richardson, the Energy Secretary, pledged to co-operate fully in any Senate hearing. After a Monday briefing by the FBI, he told Los Alamos managers that the scientist should go. A letter of dismissal was sent within hours.

Only in recent months was Mr Lee shifted to a less sensitive job, and the Government made no move to lift his security clearance until even more recently, officials acknowledged.

☐ **Beijing:** China yesterday denied as "unfounded rumors" accusations that it stole nuclear technology as tensions heightened weeks before an American visit by Zhu Rongji, its Prime Minister. *(AFP)*


LINKS

www.lanl.gov/ — Los Alamos National Laboratory
www.nndc.bnl.gov/ — National Nuclear Data Center
www.odci.gov/ic/index.html — United States Intelligence Committee


Site of the badly needed *Times* bridge in Honduras

Times readers give £100,000 for bridge

By David Adams and Richard Beeston

A BRITISH engineering company is planning to rebuild a key bridge that was washed away by Hurricane Mitch in Honduras last year, after readers of *The Times* raised more than £100,000 for its reconstruction.

Mabey and Johnson, a Berkshire-based bridge-building firm, said yesterday that it hoped to have the new bridge over the Amarateca River in place by next month. The 177ft road bridge, 15 miles north of the capital, Tegucigalpa, was washed away by a wall of water in October last year. Its loss effectively cut off thousands of villagers in the fertile valleys of Olancho province.

The new bridge is a more durable adaptation of the wartime "Bailey bridge". It will be transported in sections later this month and assembled on site. Oxfam, which co-ordinated the fundraising effort, said that £100,343 was raised from 1,491 donations. It contributed a further £6,000 to meet the target figure. Mabey and Johnson is selling the bridge at cost price and is offering site preparation and construction costs free.

As President Clinton toured the devastated country and opened a bridge rebuilt by US Marines, the Honduran Government said yesterday that the *Times* bridge was a vital component in the country's reconstruction effort.

"The rains are coming and our salvation is going to be these temporary Bailey bridges. We don't have time to build permanent bridges," said Moises Starkman, Minister for Economic Co-operation. "A country without production can't function and many of the bridges we have left are insecure," he said. "We really need Bailey bridges, and we just don't have enough of them. The *Times* readers' bridge is going to be an enormous help."

Leading article, page 25

WORLD IN BRIEF

Norway finds trace of Sellafield waste

Oslo: Norway says that it has found traces of plutonium from the Sellafield nuclear processing plant off its coasts, despite assurances that the radioactive waste was buried by Britain. "This shows that pollution from Sellafield comes to the North Sea even though it wasn't expected," Jesper Simonsen, the Deputy Environment Minister, said. Between 1960 and 1990 Britain dumped 440lb of plutonium into the Irish Sea, experts believing that it would sink into the muddy seabed. Norway, which is not a member of the European Union, will take up the issue with Germany, the current EU president. *(Reuters)*

Basque suspects seized

Paris: Police arrested six suspected Basque terrorists, including the man accused of plotting the failed assassination of King Juan Carlos of Spain in 1995 (Adam Sage writes). Javier Arizcuren-Ruiz, head of the military wing of Eta, was arrested with three others as they left a hotel here. In a second raid that coincided with a visit by the Spanish Prime Minister, José María Aznar, police held two others in a flat said to be Eta's Parisian base.

Britons held in Congo

Kinshasa: Four Britons and an American have been placed under house arrest in the Democratic Republic of Congo for questioning by security officials, diplomats said. "The four British citizens and one American are under house arrest in their hotel in Kinshasa," a Foreign Office spokesman said. The Kinshasa press earlier reported that a group of Westerners had been arrested with maps near Ndolo military airfield. *(Reuters)*

Barbie, 40, goes online

New York: Barbie the doll is 40 this week and not showing any signs of slowing down. Mattel Inc plans to release a Barbie with a butterfly tattoo on her stomach and a Working Woman Barbie, who comes with a play laptop computer and mobile phone — while the US Postal Service is issuing a Barbie stamp. The doll boasts sales of about $2 billion (£1.2 billion) a year. *(AP)*

MORE FOREIGN NEWS ON PAGE 21



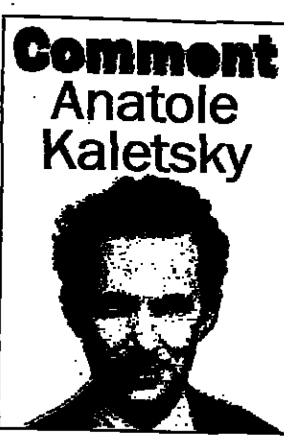
THE TIMES

Budget 99

WEDNESDAY MARCH 10 1999

Has he got his priorities right this time?

Comment
Anatole Kaletsky



IS IT too good to be true? In delivering an instant comment on each of Gordon Brown's previous Budgets, I began by asking this question and in each case I gave a favourable answer. This year, however, I have to give a less cheerful answer. This package, while it may initially be greeted as the cleverest and most popular of Mr Brown's Budgets, really *does* seem too good to be true.

The problems with this Budget are not those identified yesterday by the many City commentators — that the economic assumptions are too optimistic or that the Chancellor's tax cuts will deter the Bank of England from cutting interest rates. Contrary to City assessments, this Budget will probably be viewed by the Bank as almost neutral and will have no major affect one way or the other on the outlook for employment, inflation or economic growth.

The potential flaws of this Budget lie not in its macroeconomic impact and assumptions, but in the detailed decisions on how public money will be raised and spent. These flaws can be summarised in two questions: Where will all the money come from? And is this really how we want the Government to spend money on our behalf?

Let me begin with the second question. The Budget is full of narrowly targeted measures favouring or penalising individual economic constituencies. Some of these — poor families with children — may be deserving, but many are not. Why, for example, should the tax system encourage tiny businesses to incorporate themselves, thereby simply wasting on accountancy and administrative fees all the benefits of the lower tax rate? Why reform capital gains tax if you then impose ridiculously long holding periods that discourage genuine risk-taking and enterprise? Why should research be subsidised in small companies but not in big ones, which actually carry out most serious research? Why create a new tax allowance for people who bicycle to work?

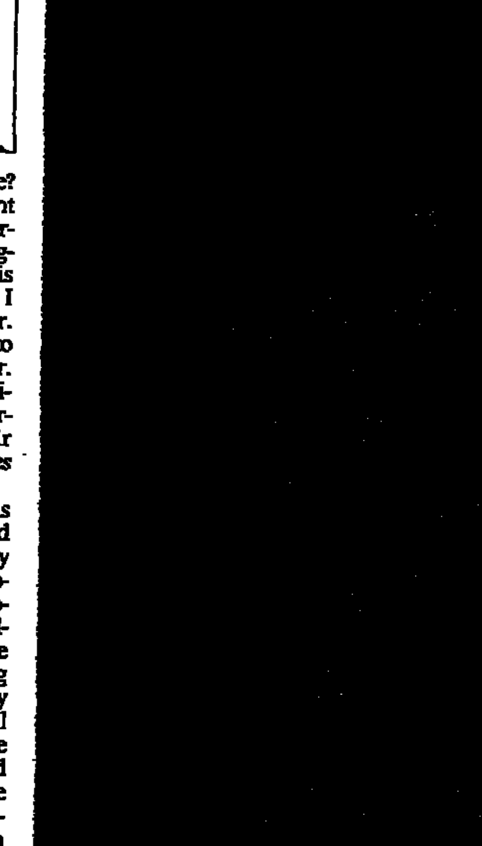
Individually all these may be small measures, but taken together they seem to represent a covert triumph for the traditions of interventionist economic meddling and social engineering that appeared to be buried with old Labour.

Turning to the question of where all the money comes from, it is worth distinguishing between three sources of the Chancellor's apparent largess. The one emphasised by Mr Brown is the remarkable fall in social security spending since the start of this Government. For this unexpected saving, amounting to an average of £3 billion a year for the next three years, Labour deserves full credit. Under the Tories, social security was consistently the most indisciplined component of public spending, regularly overspending its cash limits and demanding extra funding from the contingency reserve. Somehow Mr Brown and his colleagues appear to have tamed this monster.

The other two sources of the Chancellor's bounty have less to do with Mr Brown's husbandry. The main one is simply economic growth. As long as the economy keeps growing, tax revenues automatically tend to grow even faster, while public spending on unemployment and other symptoms of economic failure automatically tends to decline. This allows the Chancellor to forecast steady reductions in deficits and public debt ratios, even as he cuts taxes and increases spending on popular programmes such as education and health. The Treasury expects a pretty robust economic recovery between now and 2002, with the economy growing by more than 3 per cent in the general election year of 2001-02. This growth forecast, which is perfectly plausible from an economic standpoint, would on its own generate money to pay for some of the goodies announced yesterday.

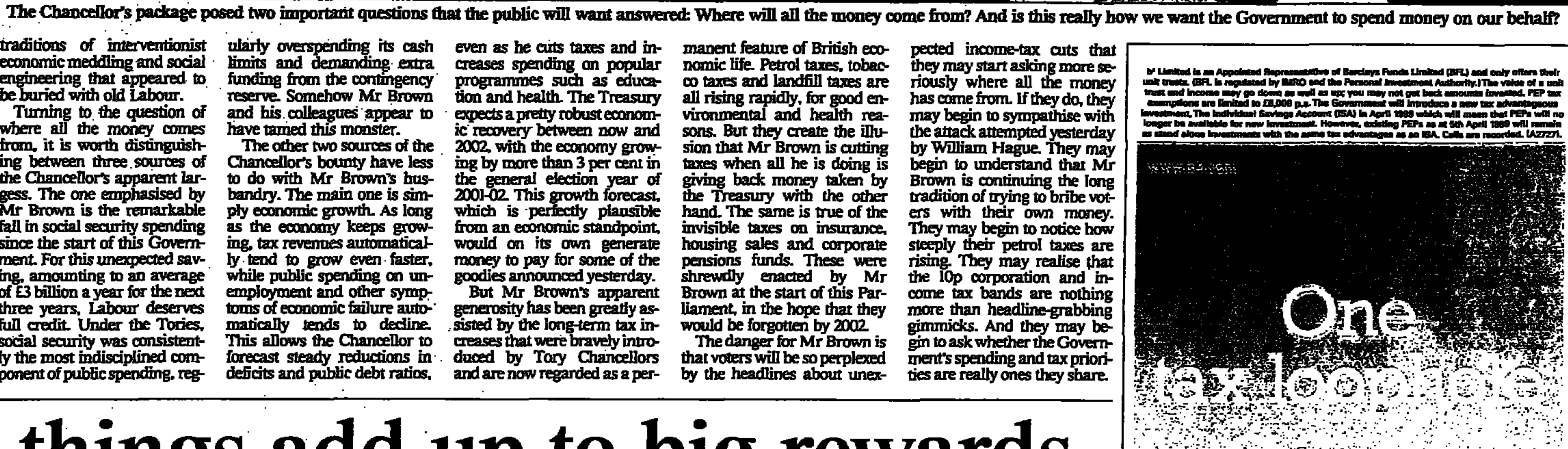
But Mr Brown's apparent generosity has been greatly assisted by the long-term tax increases that were bravely introduced by Tory Chancellors and are now regarded as a permanent feature of British economic life. Petrol taxes, tobacco taxes and landfill taxes are all rising rapidly, for good environmental and health reasons. But they create the illusion that Mr Brown is cutting taxes when all he is doing is giving back money taken by the Treasury with the other hand. The same is true of the invisible taxes on insurance, housing sales and corporate pensions funds. These were shrewdly enacted by Mr Brown at the start of this Parliament, in the hope that they would be forgotten by 2002.

The danger for Mr Brown is that voters will be so perplexed by the headlines about unexpected income-tax cuts that they may start asking more seriously where all the money has come from. If they do, they may begin to sympathise with the attack attempted yesterday by William Hague. They may begin to understand that Mr Brown is continuing the long tradition of trying to bribe voters with their own money. They may begin to notice how steeply their petrol taxes are rising. They may realise that the 10p corporation and income tax bands are nothing more than headline-grabbing gimmicks. And they may begin to ask whether the Government's spending and tax priorities are really ones they share.



CHRIS HARRIS

The Chancellor's package posed two important questions that the public will want answered: Where will all the money come from? And is this really how we want the Government to spend money on our behalf?



Little things add up to big rewards

Allan Leighton, Asda chief executive, hails the Chancellor's plans

THERE is not much in this Budget for large businesses. But I am happy with it. It is a Budget for individuals, for families and for enterprise, and the benefits it brings to all three will flow through to every sector.

Our customers and the colleagues who work with us will welcome the tax cuts, the help for working families and the improvements for pensioners. The special measures to support children will make a difference, too. I think we will see the "feel good" index rising.

All businesses will be pleased with the Budget boosts to enterprise. We must encourage entrepreneurs and I support the Chancellor's aim of recruiting, motivating and rewarding risk-takers. Cutting the red tape and recognising the extent to which individuals put themselves on the line when they start up is vital. These are the people who create jobs and wealth. Their enterprises are hotbeds of innovation that pump out the creativity and daring essential to a growing economy. Large companies need a vibrant small business sector. More than half of Asda's suppliers are small businesses and our partnerships with them allow us to bring a wider, more interesting range of products to our customers.

I look forward to hearing more about the new competition policy. I could not agree more that people in Britain are paying too much for some consumer goods. In the past few days we have announced permanent price cuts worth £200 million each year. But at the same time we have to go to the grey market for luxury goods so that we can sell them at a fair price. We can sell designer perfumes at half the manufacturers' recommended price and still make a reasonable profit.

"Shares for all" has been our motto at Asda for some time. Our colleagues have already demonstrated that owning shares in their business is an effective incentive. Last July, 26,000 received shares under our Colleague Share Ownership Plan and, in total, we now have more than 60,000 with a direct financial stake in our business. Colleagues tell me that their sense of involvement is sharpened and that they are more likely to stay with us. So I believe that the Chancellor's moves to encourage long-term employee shareholding will go down well and boost the stakeholding that gives business an extra edge.

Freezing duty on beers, wines and spirits in time for millennium parties will be as popular as the Chancellor intended. But I would like to see him go further. In Britain, £1.12 of the price of a bottle of wine is duty, compared with less than 2p in France. If the Government wants to see price parity between the UK and the rest of Europe, cutting duty rates would be a good place to start.

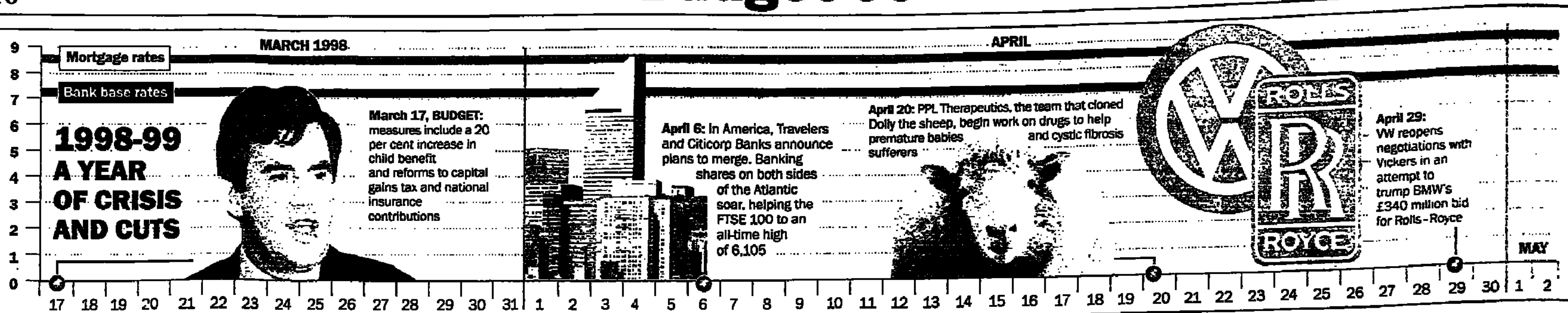
The employment scrapheap where many people over 50 years old are dumped is one of the great shames of our society. I wholeheartedly support the extension of the New Deal to this group. I know it will work. We have more than 12,000 colleagues in their second half-century, and their skills, experience and energy enrich our business.

If the Chancellor wants to be reassured that this measure will work, let me invite him to one of our eight stores where we have "golden greeters" (people who welcome you to the store) aged over 70 — going strong and full of "wow"!



PETER BYRNE

Allan Leighton: believes that large businesses will benefit from Budget-induced rise in "feel-good" index



Pensioners get tax breaks, higher income guarantee

Charities welcome £100 winter fuel payment, **Alexandra Frean** reports

TEN million pensioners will benefit from an £80 increase in the winter fuel payment to £100 per household from this year as part of a £3 billion package of measures aimed at relieving poverty among Britain's elderly.

The unexpected rise from the current £20 payment, which will go to nearly eight million pensioner households, took lobby groups representing the elderly by surprise.

Lady Greengross, director-general of Age Concern, said: "Pensioners can now look forward to a warmer winter." Mervyn Kohler, of Help the Aged, said: "We are delighted that for the first time, elderly people have figured in a substantial way in a budget."

Charities were less impressed, however, by other budget measures that aim to narrow the gap between the richest and poorest pensioners.

These include increasing the pensioners' Minimum Income Guarantee in line with earnings, instead of prices, in April 2000. On present earnings estimates, this will mean that single pensioners will receive £75 a week and couples £121. It represents an increase of £800 a year for couple and nearly £500 a year for single people compared with 1997.

Mr Kohler said that while increasing the Minimum Income Guarantee would help the poorest pensioners, it would do nothing for the considerable nubers of "nearly poor" whose income is just above benefit levels.

"The Chancellor could have used the £3 billion at his disposal to upgrade the basic state pension to £75 for all people. That would have been a far better way to spend the money," he said

PENSIONERS

About 1.6 million pensioners who currently receive income support would be eligible for the extra premium provided by the Minimum Income Guarantee.

Other measures in the package include above-inflation increases in the personal tax allowances for pensioners.

Only one third of Britain's 10.6 million pensioners pay income tax at present, and the increased allowance will obviate the need for a further 200,000 pensioners to pay, any income tax. For single people aged 65 to 74, the personal tax allowance will rise by £310 to £5,720. For couples it will rise to £15,000. Single people aged over 75 will see their personal allowance increase to £5,980.

The income limit above which additional age-related allowances are withdrawn will rise by £600 in line with inflation to £16,800.

Couples in which at least one spouse is aged 65 or over by April 5, 2000, will be able to keep the Married Couples Allowance when it is abolished for younger couples.

The Government has also asked National Savings to develop a new Pensioner Bond with a shorter term than ordinary bonds to provide pensioners with a more flexible way of generating a fixed monthly income.

By keeping the basic state pension pegged to inflation and increasing the Minimum Income Guarantee in line with earnings, the Chancellor is aiming to help people who need the money most and to ensure that it does not go to retired people living above the income support level.

It will only achieve this aim, however, if it can do more to ensure that the 700,000 or so pensioners who currently fail to claim income support to which they are entitled apply for it.

Lady Greengross said that the Budget should have increased the basic state pension above the level of state benefits. "This is the only way to guarantee retirement income to all pensioners," she said.

Alastair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, said: "We are determined that pensioners get the help they need."

Unspent benefit allows generosity to others

By Alexandra Frean
Social Affairs Correspondent

THE Chancellor's generosity towards pensioners and families has been made possible by an unexpected multibillion-pound windfall of unspent social security benefits.

This was caused by an over-estimate of the likely cost of benefits made by forecasters under the previous and present administration. As the economy thrived and unemployment fell after Labour came into office in May 1997, demand for state hand-outs fell faster than had been expected.

In 1997-98 alone the Government underspent its Social Security budget by an estimated £2 billion, according to the National Audit Office.

Although the policy changes announced in yesterday's Budget have been costed at £800 million in the first year, £1.6 billion in the second year and £1.5 billion in the third year, the net costs will be far lower because previous forecasts had allowed for higher total spending.

As a result the net effect of the changes will be to increase spending by the Department of Social Security by just £300 million in the first year, £800 million in the second and £400 million in the third.

Since taking power, Labour has declared it a

WINDFALL

major aim to cut benefit fraud and to encourage more people to come off welfare and into work.

Tighter checking on Income Support claims has produced savings of £200 million in the current financial year alone and is expected to result in savings of £1 billion over three years.

The requirement that all new benefit claimants participate in an interview with a personal adviser and the threat of a reduction in payments to certain claimants who fail to attend has led to other savings, which are as yet unquantified.

Because it was difficult to estimate before these measures were brought in just how much they would save, officials have ignored them for the purpose of current forecasts.

With benefit fraud estimated at £2 billion a year (or £5 billion a year if suspected fraud is included), the scope for further underspending of the Social Security budget and another windfall for the most needy genuine claimants still remains a possibility.

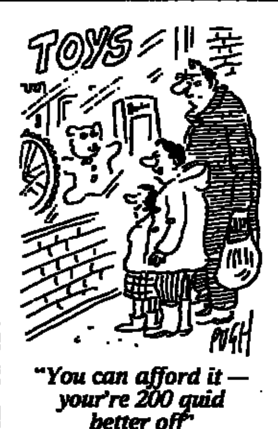
The family gains while couples lose

By Jill Sherman
Chief Political Correspondent

FAMILIES could gain £200 a year as a result of Gordon Brown's decision to scrap the married couples' allowance but replace it with a flat-rate £416-a-year tax credit for children. In what was widely seen as a bonanza Budget for families, the Chancellor stopped short of taxing child benefit for top-rate taxpayers and instead announced increases for all.

Child benefit will stay, will rise with inflation and be paid to the mother. Next year, payments for the eldest child will rise to £15 and for other children to £10 a week. This is on top of the increases of £2.95 a week for the first child which takes place next month.

Mr Brown claimed that the combined effect of all the measures in his Budget meant that the maximum support for a first child would be £40 a week



"You can afford it — your're 200 quid better off"

CHILDREN

and 700,000 children would be raised above the poverty line. He said that, on average, families would be £740 a year better off from this Budget and the last one.

But the Chancellor risked alienating the middle classes by abolishing the £190-a-week allowance for all married couples, and replacing it with a means-tested tax credit that will favour those earning less than £30,000. The credit will be tapered after one parent earns above £30,000 and will disappear once he or she earns more than £40,000. The Tories accused Mr Brown of introducing a tax system against marriage, as they pointed out that there would be no tax incentive to stay together.

Couples without children will lose £190 a year and the tax credit will be tapered away for all families where one or both parents are top-rate payers, so families earning more than £30,000 will also risk losing up to £190 a year. Treasury officials suggested that higher income families would lose £1 of tax credit for every £15 earned above the start of the top-rate tax band.

Families, where the main earner get less than £30,000, will get a flat-rate tax credit worth £416 a year from April 2001, irrespective of the number of children they have. But from next month, they will lose the married couples' allowance and therefore be £190-a-year worse off for the next 12 months.

Mr Brown's decision to abolish the married couples' allowance immediately will raise £1.6 billion a year for the Exchequer, while the introduction of a child-tax credit is estimated to cost £1.4 billion.

The measures, in line with the Chancellor's aim of helping the poorest families, also include extending entitlement to maternity allowance to women earning at least £30 a week, and introducing a new Sure Start Maternity Grant to replace the Social Fund maternity payment. Payments for Britain's poorest children will rise from £100 to £200, benefiting 200,000 families. The Chancellor also announced increases of the new Working Family Tax Credit of £2.50 per week and £4.70 a week for the under-11s. There will also be extra credits in income related benefits for younger children.

Child-care organisations welcomed the extra help for families. Diana Thurley, of the Child Poverty Action Group, said that the tax credits and benefit increases were vital but pointed out that 3.9 million children would still be below the poverty line.

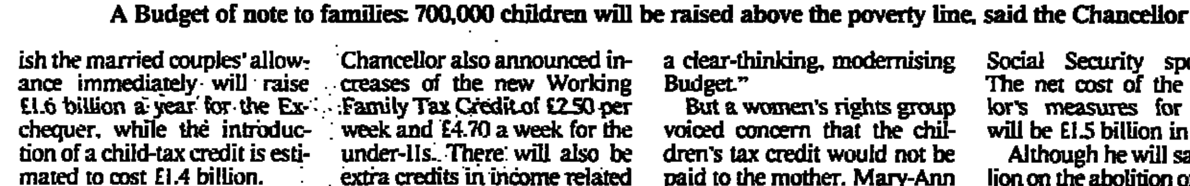
Maeve Sherlock, director of the National Council for One Parent Families, said: "This is a clear-thinking, modernising Budget."

But a women's rights group voiced concern that the children's tax credit would not be paid to the mother. Mary-Ann Stephenson, acting director of the Fawcett Society, said: "All the evidence suggests that money targeted at children is best paid to the mother."

The Tories said the new child tax credit would do nothing to encourage marriage. "By not introducing the new credits until 2001, the Chancellor has hit married couples with hikes of £1.6 billion," said Iain Duncan Smith, Shadow Social Security spokesman.

The net cost of the Chancellor's measures for children will be £1.5 billion in 2001.

Although he will save £2 billion on the abolition of the married couples' allowance by then, he will spend nearly £3 billion on other measures including: £1.4 billion on the new child tax credit, £550 million on increases in income-support child premiums, £750 million on rises in working family tax credit, £255 million on child benefit rises, £20 million on the Sure Start Maternity Grant and £15 million on maternity pay reforms.



A Budget of note to families: 700,000 children will be raised above the poverty line, said the Chancellor



Lady Ingham: big saving

Door is closing but the ceiling is raised

By Marianne Curphey

FAMILIES are being stopped from using a loophole to pass on homes to their heirs without paying inheritance tax. The Chancellor clamped down on this form of tax avoidance at the same time as he raised the threshold on all estates in line with inflation.

At present the first £223,000 of an estate is exempt from inheritance tax. Any sum over that amount — and that includes property, assets and life policies — is taxed at the recipient's highest rate. The tax raises £2 billion for the Treasury every year and is levied on about 3 per cent of all estates. From April 6, the threshold will be increased by £8,000 to £231,000.

However the Chancellor changed the house loophole in response to pressure from the Inland Revenue, which was recently defeated in a ten-year legal battle at the House of Lords. From yesterday it is no

INHERITANCE

longer possible for the rich to escape tax by transferring property to their heirs in return for a lease to live in the house rent-free. That is often known as making a "gift with reservation". In the Lords case, it was used by Lady Ingram to save her estate a six-figure sum in inheritance tax.

John Battersby, personal tax partner at the accountants KPMG, said that, from now on, wealthy families might take out insurance to cover any inheritance tax charge. Alternatively, they could sell a home, pass on the proceeds to their children and hope to survive seven years, after which the transfer would escape tax.

Inheritance tax is known among the very wealthy as the "voluntary tax", paid only by those who do not employ accountants. Between 20,000 and 30,000 estates that are liable in any year are those of the modestly well-off who die leaving only a house and some investments.

The Chancellor had been expected to scrap the potentially exempt transfers (PETs) which exempt gifts made to heirs at least seven years before die. However, he left that ruling untouched.

Swelling the coffers of the conjugal anarchist

Comment
Anne Ashworth



During the Chancellor's speech, a warm glow spread over the nation. His stirring words about children left even the most cynical observer impressed. As he vowed to support families, the usually ascetic son of the manse was using touchy feely language more reminiscent of Oprah Winfrey. Although unmarried and childless, Gordon Brown appeared to empathise with the financial and other problems of raising children and be prepared to contribute royally to the expense.

Any feelings of gratitude were however, short-lived. One glance at the small print of his measures and it was clear to see that we had been beguiled. Instead of the institution of the traditional family and married life, the Chancellor had indeed undermined matrimony.

One accountant, not usually seen as a traditional moralist, described the measures as an encitement to "conjugal anarchy", encouraging the bearing of children outside wedlock. For the first time since income tax was created, there will be no recognition of the institution of marriage within the system. Only those over 65 will continue to receive the allowance. Unless you are older, richer and have substantial assets and can use the valuable capital gains and inheritance tax measures, there is now little point in marrying, following the disappearance of the married couple's allowance. Sarah Macauley, Gordon Brown's significant other, must now despair of ever hearing those weddings bells.

Although the Chancellor might have given us to believe that all families, whatever their income, would benefit from his measures, this will not be the case. In addition, those households that will be better off will be forced to wait.

Studying the sturdy bundle of press releases which contain the real facts about Budget proposals, accountants immediately spied a sleight of hand. The married couple's allowance, worth £285 in the current tax year and £197 in the 1999/2000 tax year, will be withdrawn in April 2000. The Children's Tax Credit for families with one or more children which formed the centrepiece of the speech, will not be launched until a year later, leaving parents out-of-pocket for a year.

Families, where both parents earn more than £38,500 will be excluded from the allowance. The rules will also discriminate against families where one partner stays at home. John Battersby of KPMG, the accountants, pointed out that if both partners work and earn £30,000 apiece, they will be entitled to claim the children's tax credit allowance of £416. However, if one partner earns £38,500, the upper limit for the new credit, the household will be barred. Obviously Mr Brown believes that a mother's place is in the office.

Mothers, however, have one source of comfort. Although Mr Brown had suggested in his Pre-Budget report last November that he was minded to tax child benefit in the hands of higher-rate taxpaying recipients, he declined to do so yesterday. He may still be working out a way to do so without dismantling the independent taxation reforms under which a wife is taxed separately from her husband. Meanwhile, Posh Spice, a higher rate taxpaying mother, will doubtless be relieved to bear that the £14.40 she will receive from next month in child benefit for baby Brooklyn will not be reduced to £8.64.

Those without children may have stopped listening to Mr Brown, thinking that he had forgotten all about them. But they were also in his thoughts. In the time honoured way of Chancellors of all parties, he gave with one hand and took with the other through income tax decreases, the disappearance of mortgage interest tax relief and the change in the company car tax regime.

Let us take the case of a Double Income No Kids (Dinkie)couple. They have a mortgage and a pack-a-day nicotine habit. Each drives a BMW-3 series company car.

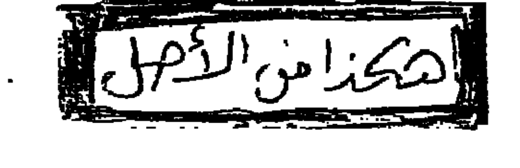
The combined impact of the Budget announcements will leave them some £600 a year worse off. Calculations from Ernst & Young, the accountants, show that the income tax changes, including the increases in the personal allowances, will make them £110 richer. However, set against this gain are the extra car costs they will face, the extra tobacco duties and the loss of MIRAS.

But, by way of consolation for this group and anyone else who wants to make long term savings for retirement, the Budget did contain one genuinely heartwarming measure. In his new guise as doughty consumer champion, Mr Brown proposed new disclosure rules that would make it easier to compare the costs of different mortgage offers, currently a close to impossible task.

The Financial Services Authority, the chief investor watchdog, will also publish the costs of pensions and other investments, permitting the public to see for the first time in clear terms how much of their money is eaten up in administration and commissions to middlemen. It is not uncommon to see £1 out of every £4 contributed to a personal pension disappear in myriad charges, with the investor receiving no guarantee of good performance in return. The financial services industry is adept at concealing costs or revealing them in such a way that even an actuary can feel confused. If they continue these practices, they will face the wrath of the Chancellor. Mr Brown is anxious to see his Individual Savings Account (Isa) be a resounding success. Low and transparent charges will help him secure acclaim.

Mr Brown was expected to reform inheritance tax. Surprisingly, he did not do so. Instead of making it more difficult for the wealthy to pass assets to their heirs during their lifetimes, he contented himself with the closing of the Ingram loophole. Lady Ingram gave away her house and its acres away to her family but continued to live in the stately pile.

Despite the protestations of the Inland Revenue, her estate escaped tax. It seems that the Chancellor concluded that the rich will always find a way to avoid inheritance tax.





Miras cut costs £200 a year

By Rachel Kelly
Property Correspondent

THE abolition of mortgage interest relief at source (Miras) ends one of the middle classes' most cherished perks, although lenders and estate agents said it would have little effect on property sales. The 0.5 per cent increase in stamp duty on properties over £250,000 is expected to slow down the top end of the market. Agents said that prices would not be affected.

Miras will be withdrawn from April 2000, adding about £200 a year to the housing costs of the country's ten million homeowners. The rate has been cut in successive Budgets, and low interest rates that are boosting the housing market will take much of the sting out of its abolition.

Milan Khatri, from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, said: "The abolition of Miras was widely expected, but we would have preferred a phasing out, reducing it to 5 per cent before abolishing it altogether. But because interest rates are so low, this will dampen the effects of its abolition."

Housing charities welcomed the abolition of Miras, which they say benefited owner-occupiers and pushed up house prices to the exclusion of a vibrant private rented sector.

Richard Best, director of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, which sponsored the 1985 Duke of Edinburgh Inquiry into Housing, and which recommended the abolition of Miras, said: "We are pleased to see a level playing field between the owner-occupied and the renting sectors of the housing market. This is a healthy change to the housing market." He said the tax in the 1980s had helped those paying higher rates of tax. "The more tax you paid, the more you were helped. It did not help young people funding their first home."

The average homeowner, with a 70 per cent mortgage of £59,415 on the average-priced house of £85,257, is currently paying £3,949 a year in mortgage payments. Tax relief is at 10 per cent and mortgage rates 7 per cent. When Miras is abolished, the annual repayment will be £4,159 — £210 extra a year, or £17.50 a month, according to Sue Anderson, of the Council of Mortgage Lenders.

She added that abolishing Miras

HOUSING

would have more impact in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the most northerly regions, where house prices were lowest and where tax relief made up a larger proportion of the mortgage.

Households in London will pay an extra 3.7 per cent on their housing costs, up from £5,647 a year with tax relief at 10 per cent, to £5,857 with no tax relief. Households in the North will pay 7.6 per cent more, up from £2,777 a year with tax relief at 10 per cent, to £2,987 a year with no tax relief.

At present there is no stamp duty on properties sold for less than £60,000. For houses between £60,000 and £250,000, it is 1 per cent: £250,000 to £500,000 2.5 per cent from next week; and over £500,000 3.5 per cent from next week. The increases would leave 96 per cent of property sales unaffected, Mr Khatri said.

Sales in Central London and the Home Counties have already slowed down, after earlier increased in stamp duties. In 1997 there were 26,000 homes traded at £250,000 or more, out of a 1.3 million total, according to Inland Revenue figures. For a £250,000 house, there will be £6,250 to pay in stamp duty, while the buyer of a £300,000 property will pay £7,500. Anyone buying a £500,000 property with 3.5 per cent stamp duty will pay £127,500.

Richard Gaynor, from FPD Savills, said that, while the current increases would have little effect on the market, possible future rises to bring Britain's stamp duty in line with the European rate of 5 per cent would affect the market badly.

Miras was introduced in April 1983 under Nigel Lawson's Chancellorship, with the ceiling set at £30,000. Before 1974, all interest on loans for buying or improving a house qualified for tax relief. Under the 1974 Finance Act, introduced when Denis Healey was Chancellor, relief was restricted to a loan ceiling of £25,000.

Since 1983, Miras has been scaled back substantially. It was withdrawn from home improvements in 1988-99, and in August 1988 multiple tax relief (where unmarried couples buying together could claim relief) was abolished. The higher-rate tax relief was abolished from 1991-92 under Norman Lamont's Chancellorship: from 1994-95, relief was available only at a lower rate of 20 per cent. It was reduced to 15 per cent from April 1995 by Kenneth Clarke and to 10 per cent from April 1998.

If Miras had been increased in line with house price movements since 1983, it would now be providing tax relief up to a ceiling of nearly £90,000. The cost to the Treasury has gradually reduced since 1992. In 1993-94, the cost was £4.3 billion, £3.5 billion in 1994-95, £2.7 billion in 1995-96, an estimated £1.9 billion in 1998-1999.

Its abolition will help to fund the introduction of a 10p rate of income tax.

Day of the 20p cigarette draws ever nearer

By Richard Duce

THE day of the 20p cigarette moved nearer last night as smokers were hit by the second price increase in six months.

Back in the 1970s, 20p — or four shillings — would have bought a packet of 20 cigarettes. Today, after the Chancellor's increases, the price of a single cigarette is 19.1 pence. City analysts saw the 17.5p immediate increase in the price of a pack of 20 cigarettes as an example of taxation by stealth.

Mr Brown announced in a pre-Budget review last November that prices would rise by 6 per cent and revealed a similar increase yesterday. The move creates an instant half a billion pounds in revenue for the Exchequer. It will be of some cheer to smokers that there will not be another rise until next year's Budget.

Maurice Fitzpatrick, of City accountants Chantry Vellacott DFK, said: "It really is stealth taxation gone mad."

From 6pm last night the increase also put 7.5p on a packet of small cigars and 9.5p on a 25-gram pack of pipe tobacco.

Cigarette manufacturers had hoped for a cut in duty.

"I've given up — bank manager's orders"

TOBACCO & ALCOHOL

While the Chancellor pledged to combat smuggling from the Continent he was encouraging bootleggers by keeping the cost of tobacco high, they said.

The Tobacco Manufacturers' Association said: "By putting cigarette tax up yet again, the Government has demonstrated its head-in-the sand attitude to the disastrous knock-on effects of the UK's high tobacco tax policy."

A packet of 20 cigarettes will now cost £3.82, compared with £1.98 for a similar packet in France.

The anti-smoking lobby welcomed the increase. Clive Bates, director of Action on Smoking and Health, said: "We are very satisfied. When cigarette prices rise, tobacco consumption falls as smokers cut down, give up or never start in response to the price."

The decision to freeze duty on alcohol encountered a frosty response from the Scotch Whisky Association, which, like the tobacco industry, had been hoping for cuts. The industry is alarmed at a 7 per cent decline in sales as shoppers cash in on cheaper whisky prices in France.

The association said: "The Chancellor made a start in reversing the trend last year by freezing tax and we were hopeful there would be a cut this year. Unfortunately, the situation has remained the same, and the cause of the industry's decline — cross-border shopping — has not been tackled."

The Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association said: "A freeze is very welcome as far as it goes, but as long as the duty differentials between the UK and France remain so high, jobs will go, pubs will close and crime will increase."

Crackdown on the smugglers

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Correspondent

A POWERFUL figure is to be appointed by the Government to combat the cross-Channel smuggling of tobacco and alcohol by criminal gangs.

The Treasury announced an independent evaluation of Customs strategy yesterday and said that the Government was losing £1.5 billion a year in duty on tobacco. According to some estimates, the country could also be losing another £1.5 billion per year on smuggled alcohol.

There is speculation that a senior figure from industry or commerce could be recruited to devise and run the evaluation. Customs officials refused to comment yesterday on who would carry out the work, but acknowledged that the evaluation would be independent of Whitehall.

The decision to undertake the evaluation reflects ministers' concerns that, despite increased operations by Customs officials, they have failed to stem the tide. It will particularly target tobacco smuggling, seen as a growth area. In Gordon Brown's Comprehensive Spending Review last summer, an extra £35 million went to anti-smuggling operations and to fund an additional 100 investigators.

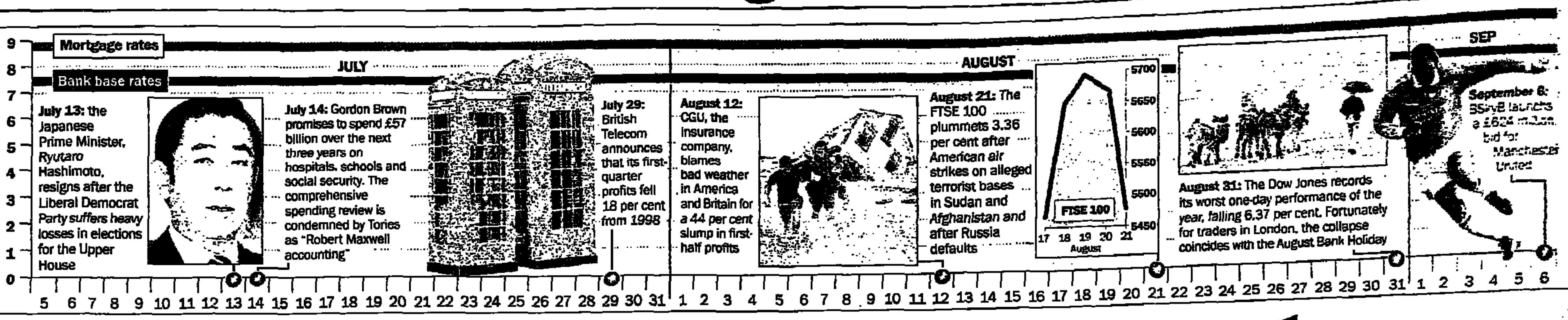
CUSTOMS BATTLE

Whoever carries out the evaluation faces a tough task. Top-level criminals have moved into smuggling tobacco and alcohol because the penalties are low compared with the prison terms handed out for drug-trafficking.

About a quarter of the cigarette market could now involve smuggled tobacco. Seizures by Customs officers in the first six months of this financial year were 300 per cent up on the same period of 1997-98. The market in rolling tobacco for cigarettes is dominated by supplies from The Netherlands and losses in duty could reach £800 million a year. Cargoes of drink are routinely brought in by ferry from France, The Netherlands and Belgium.

Investigators said the increase in duty on cigarettes announced in the Budget would increase the profits, and hence the temptation, for smugglers.





Small-car drivers get a £55 bonus

MOTORING AND FUEL

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

DRIVERS of the smallest cars were handed a £55 reduction in their car tax yesterday as Gordon Brown called for wider use of vehicles that cause less pollution.

Owners of cars with engine sizes below 1100cc will pay annual car tax of £100 from June, instead of the new standard rate of £155.

While trimming the tax for smaller cars, Mr Brown announced radical reforms to private and company car taxation, as well as fuel tax increases that make British petrol the most expensive in Europe. Pump prices rose last night above the £3-a-gallon mark even for the least expensive petrol as the Chancellor continued his five-year plan of increasing petrol tax above the rate of inflation.

He emphasised that drivers of heavily polluting cars faced higher car taxes from next year as vehicle excise duty was linked directly to carbon dioxide levels.

The £55 discount will apply to almost one in ten of the car population. Among cars that will cost £100 a year to tax will be the smallest Ford Fiesta, VW Polo, Citroën Saxo, Mini and Fiat Cinquecento.

The Chancellor made it clear that the reduction would be only the first move in changes that will increase taxes on the least efficient cars. From next year, higher car tax rates will be introduced to make up for the £110 million lost to the Treasury each year through the reductions. All new cars registered from autumn 2000 will be taxed according to their carbon dioxide emissions.

Treasury officials are examining the introduction of four bands, taking the annual car tax for the most polluting cars close to £300. Details of engine sizes or carbon dioxide levels have yet to be decided.

Mr Brown has backed away from his original plan to introduce higher rates of car tax on existing cars according to their engine size. The suggestion prompted widespread anger from motor manufacturers, who claimed that many large-engined cars were much more fuel efficient than older small cars, some of which are among the worst polluters on the road.

Continuing the upward pressure on fuel prices, Mr Brown announced that unleaded petrol will rise by 3.79p a litre, taking average prices to 67.7p a litre (about £3.04p a gallon). Leaded petrol goes up 4.25p a litre to around 74.4p a litre, while diesel rises 6.14p to 71p a litre. The increases took the price of unleaded petrol narrowly ahead of The Netherlands, previously the most expensive country in the EU. The rise was in line with the fuel escalator that raises fuel duty by 6 per cent each year.

Radical changes to be introduced to company car taxation include switching charges away from the value of the car to its emissions levels. Some 2.3million company car drivers will be affected by the changes, to be included in legislation next year. At present, company cars are taxed at up to 35 per cent of their cash value, but Mr Brown said that, from 2002, the income tax charged on company cars will be related to emissions of carbon dioxide and possibly other pollutants.

From next year, manufacturers must disclose the carbon dioxide levels of all new cars and Mr Brown believes that this will enable a banded system of company car taxation to be introduced.

The Chancellor made no changes to the mileage thresholds of 2,500 and 18,000 miles above which company car drivers pay progressively lower tax rates. However, he reduced the tax discounts available on older company cars and increased the tax levels on free fuel used for private mileage. The changes, he said, would add about £1 a week in tax for most company car drivers in 2002.

Mr Brown said that he planned to "reward the use of fuel-efficient company cars and remove today's counter-productive incentive to drive more miles in order to get bigger discounts." He insisted that the changes would not increase Treasury revenue but would offer incentives to companies to use smaller-engined or more fuel-efficient cars.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders said the tax changes would "not necessarily hit the gas guzzlers", while Friends of the Earth gave Mr Brown "six out of 10" for his environmental measures.

The Chancellor announced that he would freeze vehicle excise duties for 98 per cent of lorries, and would reduce the licence fee by £1,000 for lorries and buses that convert their engines to take cleaner diesel.

He also increased the amount paid to local authorities to add rural bus services from £100million to £120million over the next two years. Mr Brown said that employers would not be charged tax when providing subsidised buses, car sharing schemes and other environmentally friendly means of transport to work, such as mileage allowances for cyclists.

PETROL PRICE BREAKDOWN
Monthly average prices pence per litre
Pump price with tax
Pump price before tax
Crude oil price
1995 1996 1997 1998

THE COST OF PETROL IN EUROPE
Average prices for unleaded petrol, pence per litre
Duty and VAT / Profit and cost
Britain, France, Finland, Netherlands, Sweden, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, Austria, Ireland, Spain, Luxembourg, Greece
0p 10 20 30 40 50 60 70


From autumn 2000, all new cars will be taxed according to the amount of carbon dioxide they emit

From bicycling to recycling, the taxes are turning green

THE ENVIRONMENT

BY NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

GREEN reforms in the Budget were aimed at air pollution, global warming and rubbish tips. Patricia Hewitt, Economic Secretary at the Treasury, said that this marked the beginning of ecological tax changes to put the burden on industries that polluted or made intensive use of energy and resources.

The centrepiece is an energy levy on industry. This has yet to be agreed, but will come into force in April 2002. It is intended to cut emissions of global warming gases by 1.5 million tonnes. Alongside tax breaks for less-polluting cars and lorries, the measures should save three million tonnes.

Under agreements signed in 1997 in Kyoto, Japan, Britain is required to reduce global warming gases by 12.5 per cent by 2010. It has a voluntary national target to reduce them by 20 per cent or 36 million tonnes by the same date.

Ms Hewitt said that energy-intensive industries such as steel or chemicals would be allowed to draw up voluntary plans for cutting energy use. There will be help for energy efficient projects.

It is understood that companies that fail to meet these plans, to be submitted soon to the Department of the Environment, will face stiff penalties. Ms Hewitt said that energy intensive industries would all face some level of energy tax, no matter how well designed the voluntary plans prove to be. Money raised from the levy will be used to reduce a company's national insurance contributions by 0.5 per cent.

Other key announcements included such subjects as cycling, car-sharing and subsidised buses to work. Last year John Prescott urged companies to draw up travel-to-work plans to reduce air pollution and congestion, but several of the schemes have been taxed as benefits in kind. Boots the Chemist has been sent a £500,000 tax bill for a scheme that subsidises 60 buses to bring employees to its Beeston site in Nottinghamshire.

Ms Hewitt said that the Chancellor's announcement ended "the nonsense" of taxing green commuter plans. From next month, tax on employee benefits will exclude works-bus services, subsidies to public bus services that bring in employees, bicycles, cycle safety equipment and workplace parking for bicycles.

Employers will also be allowed to pay tax-free for alternative transport to help staff to get home when car-sharing schemes break down. People who use their own bicycles for business travel will also qualify for capital allowances and a tax-free allowance of 12p per mile.

A "rubbish escalator" was unveiled to reduce the quantity of waste going to rubbish tips. Ms Hewitt said that the Government intended to send a strong signal to councils, businesses and industry to reduce the contamination of land and water, and to boost the fortunes of recycling.

In the 1998 Budget Mr Brown had announced that the tax on rubbish going to holes in the ground would rise by £7 to £10 a tonne on April 1, 1999. This is now to be increased by £1 a tonne each year from next year until at least April 2004.

Environmental groups had been pressing for an aggregates tax on quarry companies. They claim that a tax would increase the amount of rubble recycled for house and road building and reduce damage to the countryside.

Yesterday the Government shied away from bringing in such a tax, but Ms Hewitt said that it would publish draft legislation on an aggregates tax covering the digging of sand, gravel and hard rock.

She said it would be pressing industry to develop voluntary policies and that, if the industry failed to draft tough environmental agreements, the Government would bring in an aggregates tax.

Ms Hewitt said that the Department of the Environment was still studying options for a pesticides tax to reduce the level of chemicals sprayed by farmers, industry and councils. The department would be publishing its findings shortly.


On the buses: employers' subsidies will be tax-free

Relief for 'democracy of giving'

CHARITIES

BY MARK HENDERSON

EVERY charity in Britain will be allowed to claim an extra £30 on donations of £100 or more from the end of next year.

Thousands of organisations will benefit from a proposed £60 million extension to the Millennium Gift Aid programme, which cut from £250 to £100 the minimum donation that qualifies for tax relief. The move was announced alongside the Budget in the Government's long-awaited Review of Charity Taxation.

While Millennium Gift Aid applied only to charities working on poverty or education projects in the Third World and lasted only to the end of 2000, the new scheme, beginning in January 2001, will include all charitable organisations. The threshold at which tax reliefs begin could eventually fall still further, and donations made in installments will also qualify.

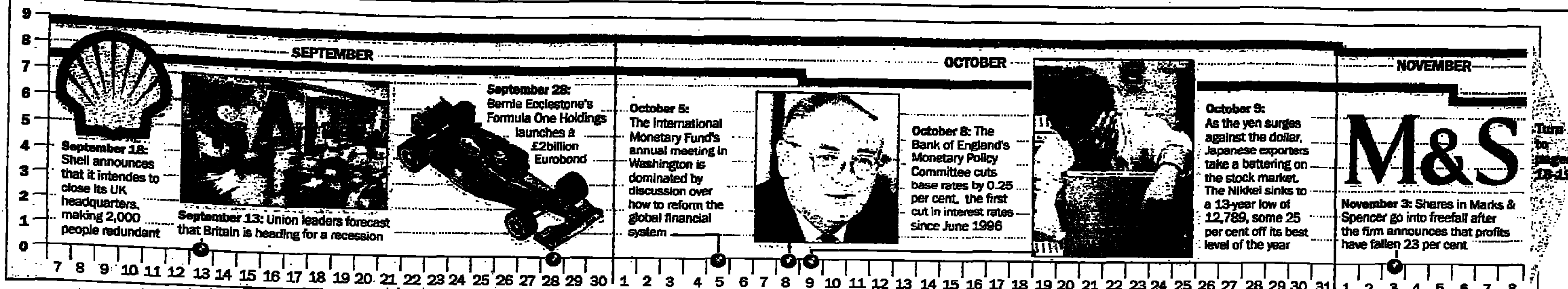
Gordon Brown said the incentives would promote a new culture of charity. "Instead of charity seen in the old way, the rich bestowing favours on the poor, I want a democracy of giving, where all those who can, help all those who can't," he said.

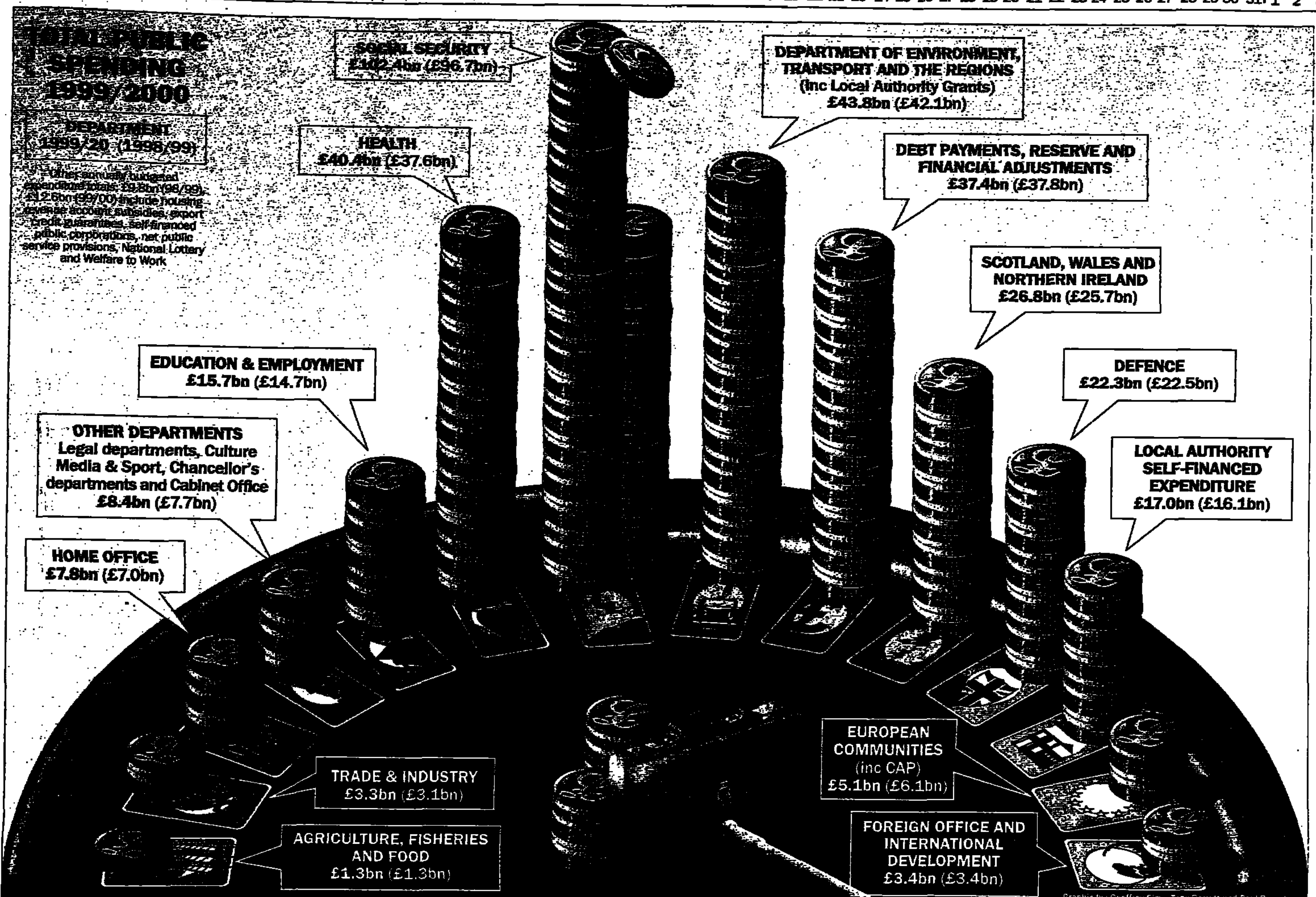
"Today, in our consultation document on tax and charities, we propose extending the tax advantages of Millennium Gift Aid.

"We propose that every charity, national and international, should be able to benefit from this new tax relief. We propose in future for every £100 a British citizen donates to any charity, the Government will contribute £30."

The new incentives are needed because charitable giving in Britain has fallen substantially in recent years. Figures from the National Council for Voluntary Organsiations show donations have dropped by 31 per cent over five years, with young people becoming especially unlikely to give.







Tax credit to cut cost of firms' scientific research

SCIENCE

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

SCIENCE, technology and the generation of wealth played a more prominent part in the Budget than expected.

Mr Brown announced that from next year tax credits for research and development will be introduced to cut the cost of research for small and medium-sized businesses.

For companies making profits, the Treasury says that the tax credit will cut the cost of research and development by 12.5 per cent. For those not yet in taxable profit, the credit will cut the cost by 24 per cent, though it is not yet clear how the credit will work.

The danger from the Treasury's point of view will be that tax accountants will find ways to define all sorts of activities as research and development.

The Chancellor also announced that £100 million would go to the Joint Infrastructure Fund, an initiative launched last July to renew laboratories and equipment in universities. This does not actually appear to be new money, rather the allocation of money already promised to the Higher Education Funding Council.

An additional £1[illegible] million was earmarked for University Challenge, which provides funds for the best new commercial ventures emerging from universities, represents a 30 per cent increase in funding.

Cyber Budget offers vision of the future

BY JOHN O'LEARY AND MARK HENDERSON

COMPUTERS

GORDON BROWN offered a vision of Britain thriving and connected to the computer revolution.

Tax breaks will encourage up to one million adults to hone their computer skills. Small businesses will benefit from the "e-commerce" made possible by the Internet and high-speed computers, and firms will act as training centres for their workforce under a Computers For All loan scheme allowing employees to take computers home.

"Anyone left out of the new knowledge revolution will be left behind in the new knowledge economy," Mr Brown said. Information exchanges — many at cybercafés — will offer the chance to borrow "computers and software in the new century the way local libraries have loaned books in the last century".

Mr Brown added: "Our target is a national network of 1,000 computer learning centres, one for every community in Britain. They will be in schools, colleges, libraries, in Internet cafés and on the high street."

The technological revolution, costing almost £2 billion, will help to provide "universal learning at every age". Inner-city schools will receive £100 million to upgrade their technology and there will be £20 million to give more teachers laptops for home use.

Mr Brown focused on the Government's ambition to promote lifelong learning. Hefty discounts would be available for training courses. Up to 100,000 people already opening Individual Learning Accounts will be able to claim 80 per cent discounts on fees for basic education courses, including computer literacy.

In a nod towards the world-beating wealth of the ultimate computer nerd, Bill Gates, Mr Brown emphasised that Britain could "no longer afford to lag behind America" in technology — "the great driver of world economic growth today".

A £150 million tax credit on research and development will give "new business and small business — the biggest source of innovative ideas — cash help to research and develop their innovations even before they make their first profits".

Computer experts said the "cyber Budget" was an ambitious but achievable plan that could bring great economic benefits to Britain.

Chris Godwin, corporate affairs manager at IBM, said: "Anything that encourages people to develop skills in this area has to be a sound policy because it is effectively playing on our strengths as a nation."


Computer boom time: laptops and PCs for all

IN BRIEF

£300m for Scots, Irish and Welsh

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will receive an extra £300 million in capital spending. Scotland will receive £165 million to cut crime and modernise schools. Northern Ireland will also use its £50 million to improve public services. Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said that projects would include new computer learning centres and modernisation of healthcare facilities. The Welsh Office said that no decisions had been taken on how to use its extra £80 million.

Rise in capital gains allowance

The Chancellor raised the capital gains tax allowance in line with inflation, from £6,800 to £7,100 for each person. However, from 1999-2000 capital gains tax rates will be aligned with those for savings income, and gains will be charged at 20 per cent, or 40 per cent for higher-rate taxpayers.

Tables to keep tabs on costs

Investors will be able to compare the true cost of savings, pensions and insurance as league tables of charges are to be published by the Financial Services Authority. The Chancellor also said that banks and building societies would be required to publish reliable price information about mortgages.

Sport wins from betting boost

BY JOHN GOODBODY
SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

POOLS DUTY

GRASSROOTS sport, including many small clubs in the Football League, will benefit from the Government's decision to cut duty on the football pools companies by 9 per cent.

As part of the deal, 3 per cent of the increased turnover of the pools will go to the Football Trust and a further 3 per cent to the Foundation for Sport and the Arts until at least March 2002.

The income of the pools companies has been savagely cut since the National Lottery started in 1994 which has affected the cash given to sporting and artistic projects. In 1993-94, pools turnover was £750 million; last year £250 million.

The announcement by the Chancellor that duty would be reduced from 26.5 per cent to 17.5 per cent delighted sporting organisations, which had lobbied for the pools to be given a more even playing field against the lottery in their battle to attract punters.

Tom Pendry, the chairman of the Football Trust and Labour MP for Stalybridge and Hyde, said the money would allow the trust to deliver "its vital programme of safety and improvement work for Football League clubs and continue its much-needed funding for grassroots football".

Littlewoods Pools said that the reduction would allow the company to invest in new technology to raise income by providing every collector with a hand-held computer terminal that will "revolutionise the way that the pools are entered".

It would also provide more prizes for punters.

THE TIMES

Budget jury

Verdict goes to the 10p surprise





Andrew Thomson, 49, and Janice Thomson, 48, of Putney, South London.
Occupation: Mrs Thomson is a director of Chelsea Financial Services; Mr Thomson is an administrator there.
Annual income: Mrs Thomson £60,000; Mr Thomson £25,000. Plus bonuses.
Children: Three (15, 17 and 20).
Inheritance: expect modest sum from each set of parents.
Home: own house and freehold, valued at £480,000, with mortgage of £270,000.
Personal pension: he expects £18,000 a year from previous job; her employer puts £180 a month into pension which she hopes will give her £24,000 a year.
Investments: £50,000 in Peps.
Vehicles: Company car and two private cars.
Hopes and fears: "Fear further attack on tax credits for pensions and savings. Don't want to see increase in personal taxation. Want increased flexibility in pensions."
Politics: Mrs Thomson, a "left winger", voted Labour; Mr Thomson, right of centre.
Response: "Inheritance tax [threshold] was raised rather than lowered or abolished. We are not better off but haven't been hit in a lot of ways we thought we would be. It's really only Miras that we've lost out on."

NURSE



Louise Griffiths, 26, of Southfields, South London.
Occupation: staff nurse at Royal Brompton Hospital.
Income: £14,700 a year.
Marital status: *single*.
Home: private rented accommodation, £450 a month.
Personal pension: paying into NHS pension plan.
Vehicle: Citroen AX
Drinks: average ten units of alcohol per week.
Hopes and fears: "Better nursing conditions with increased NHS budget. An extra penny on tax to go towards NHS. Increase in my wage which reflects role as carer. Reduced petrol prices."
Politics: undecided at last election so did not vote. Leaning towards Liberal Democrats.
Effect: £98.20 a year better *off because of 10 per cent tax* band. No specific details on pay for nurses but £500 million pledged for NHS emergency units.
Response: "He brushed over the issue of nurses' pay. It doesn't give me an incentive for anything. I can't survive every month without doing at least two night shifts *from agency work in addition* to my full-time job while doing a degree."

HIGHER—RATE TAXPAYER



Sumiya Basha, 30, of Clapham, South London.
Occupation: solicitor at Kennedys commercial litigation firm.
Income: *higher-rate taxpayer* (more than £35,000 a year).
Marital status: single.
Home: owns one-bed flat worth £130,000.
Mortgage: £110,000.
Personal pension: 5-10 per cent of monthly salary paid into private scheme.
Vehicle: Renault 5.
Drinks: average of 10-14 units of alcohol per week.
Hopes and fears: "Would like to see increase in spending on NHS, education. Mortgage relief and tax would affect me."
Politics: Did not vote in the election: "not sufficiently inspired".
Effect: £275 a year better off because of increase in personal allowance, the new 10p tax band and the increase in the higher-rate tax threshold to £28,000 a year.
Response: "It will work out the same at the end of the day because I lose Miras. I didn't think the Budget *would affect me, but I think* it's a sensible Budget. I liked the tone of it."

DIRECTOR WITH COMPANY CAR

Marcus and Joanna Smith, 39 and 35, of Wimbledon, South London.
Occupation: Mr Smith is a director of Shandwick public relations consultancy; Mrs Smith is a housewife.
Children: Charlie, 6, Jamie, 4, Ben, 1.
Income: higher-rate tax payer (more than £35,000)
Inheritance: possible sum to come from Mrs Smith's parents. Trust funds set up for all three children.
Home: own four-bedroom house and freehold, valued at £350,000.
Personal pension: Mr Smith is in his company scheme.
Investments: shares, Peps and Tessa.
Vehicle: Volvo (company-owned) worth £20,000.
Drinks: wine with supper — about 25 units of alcohol per *week between them*.
Hopes and fears: "Make substantial committment to *research and development* sector. Tax breaks for companies in that sector and trying to innovate. Expect to be clobbered on company car but realise it's necessary."
Politics: both have always voted Labour.
Effect of Budget: the Smiths are about £500 a year better off, mainly because of the change in income-tax rates. They also benefit from the higher threshold for capital gains tax.
Reaction: "Broadly I give it the thumbs up. It's good news for business and for families, although I will be hit by the erosion of allowances. My shareholdings are fairly *small so I don't regard the* CGT and IHT *increase* as major differences. The increase in petrol doesn't surprise me. It's part of a wider package of *environmental* measures which the Government needs to tackle."





SINGLE MOTHER

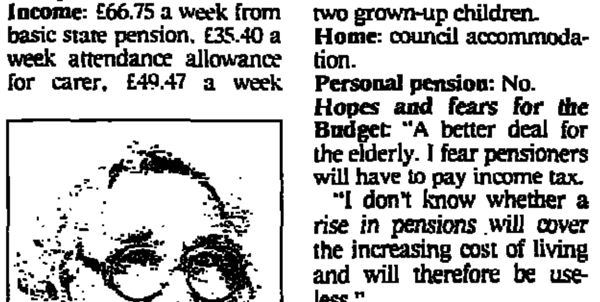
Joanne Bergin, 35, of Northfleet, in Kent.
Occupation: single mother to Laura, 10.
Income (from benefits): £68.80 a week income support and £17.10 family allowance, *of which £11.45 is child* benefit and £5.65 is a single parent's allowance.
Marital status: single.
Home: council flat, rent of *£200 a month covered by* housing benefit.
Personal pension: No
Hopes and fears: "My hopes are that the Budget will be fair to single mums. I would like to see benefit for single parents go up but I don't really see that happening as they haven't reversed any of the benefits the Conservatives did away with."
Politics: strongly anti-Conservative and voted Labour in the last election.
Effect of Budget: better off by £3 a week after child benefit rose to £15 per week. No other changes outside rate of inflation.
Response: "*The Budget is* benefiting people with children if they are married and in work. It's rewarding people who are towing the *party line*

"It doesn't make much difference to me at the moment but if I go back to work soon, which I'm planning *to do, then it will* make a difference because of the 10 per cent tax rate. That's a big incentive for me to work.

"*Realistically, I knew they* wouldn't do anything for single parents."

OLDER PENSIONER

Violet Newitt, 88, of Kingsbury, North London.
Occupation: retired.
Income: £66.75 a week from basic state pension, £35.40 a week attendance allowance for carer, £49.47 a week income support. Total: £151.62 a week.



Marital status: widow with two grown-up children.
Home: council accommodation.
Personal pension: No.
***Hopes and fears for the* Budget**: "A better deal for the elderly. I fear pensioners will have to pay income tax.

"I don't know whether a *rise in pensions* will cover the increasing cost of living and will therefore be useless."
Politics: Voted for Labour in *the last election but* undecided until outcome of Budget.
Effect: £600 per year better off from an extra £10 a week on her state pension and an additional £80 for the winter allowance.
Response: "It will compensate for the paltry 25p a week they gave us if you happen to be over 80.

"The cold weather payment is a great boon. I will be able to afford a bottle of brandy at Christmas.

"Food is going to go up though, so it will get swallowed up.

"There are things I would *like which* I can't afford and £10 a week won't go very far towards buying them.

"I would like a new mattress for my bed and I can't get the money together — they don't seem to realise that when you get to my age things that you've had for a long time wear out.

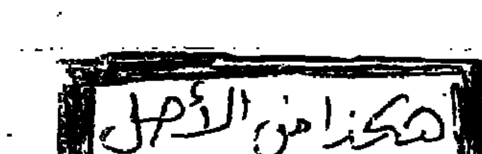
"You can't find money for a new washing machine when you're 88."

Picture and research team

The main picture of *The Times* jury was taken by Peter Nicholls, who used a MAMIYA 645 camera, in studio conditions, a 55mm lens, aperture of f16.5 on Ilford FP4 film.

Additional pictures: Paul Rogers.

Research by: Susie Steiner, Alex Frean, Elizabeth Judge, Alex O'Connell, Paula Hawkins, Karen Woolfson and Suzie Kew.



Viewers find in Brown's favour

By Robin Young

IF THE reactions of *The Times* focus group are typical of the way the Budget was received by the viewing public, then the Chancellor scored a palpable, though somewhat unintelligible, success.

Having been led by many experts to expect a steady-as-you-go and boring Budget, the focus group found themselves watching a speech larded almost to bursting with superlatives. Everything the Chancellor announced appeared to be the lowest, the first, the best, the most favourable or the most generous.

It cannot be said that our group followed his galloping giveaway speech (or his crafty clawback swipes) with quite the rapt attention and carefully adjusted eyebrows achieved by Tony Blair, sitting at Mr Brown's side.

Nor could they quite match the prim delight captured in the expression of the Chancellor's other neighbour, Margaret Beckett. Our audience, watching a wall-size screen in a conference room in Times House, listened with extreme respect and a complete absence of cynical banter.

Even Violet Newitt, 88, listened in almost unbroken silence to the Chancellor's incessant flow of fiscal information. Only when he reached the bit about local authorities lending computers in the next century like libraries lent books in the past, did she finally lean forward and pronounce with satisfaction: "That's good."

The Chancellor got his first laugh when he told "those with an interest in European issues" that Britain's finances were "now well within the Maastricht criteria".

There was also a titter for his little traps laid for Tory hecklers, like saying it would not be prudent to introduce the 10p starting rate of income tax in 2000 and then announcing that it would be brought in this year instead.

The biggest laugh came when the Chancellor mentioned that the vocational tax relief he was phasing out had been going to benefit people taking such things as diving and flying lessons.

The group also appreciated the Chancellor's exposure of the married couple's allowance as something that did not apply only to the married, or to couples, and which was not really an allowance, but was now so confused that it could actually be doubled in value in a year of separation.

Mr Brown may be a dour kind of fellow, but he not only beat Gladstone for time. He beat him for jokes, too.

RETIRED COUPLE

Alfred and Pam Fisher, both 65, of Rickmansworth, in Hertfordshire
Occupation: Mr Fisher is a retired stained-glass artist; Mrs Fisher is a retired teacher.
Children: five grown-up children, all left home.
Home: £160,000 three-bedroom house and freehold with no mortgage.
Pensions: currently drawing £15,000 a year from private pension schemes, £5,000 from investments and £69-a-week state pension each; Mrs Fisher's pension is £7,000 a year.
Investments: Pep and bonds
Vehicle: Subaru estate (privately owned)
Drink: Bottle of wine with supper — 25 to 30 units alcohol a week between them.
Hopes and fears: "Hope there won't be an increase in petrol tax and no rise in tax base. Concerned about long-term care proposals. Don't want to see money disappearing rapidly if hospitalised or need care."
Politics: centre; voted Liberal Democrat in last election.
Effect of the Budget: The Fishers are £900 a year better off, mainly because of the increase in pensioners' personal allowances by £310 each and the increase in state benefit from £69 to £78 per week.
Reaction: "I am pleased with the increase in the state pension, because it was extremely low, and that the married couples' allowance won't be abolished for pensioners. The increase in petrol was a bit of a blow. I liked the Budget as a whole as it helps families, schools and people who have small cars, though we don't have one. There was no increase in tax on spirits and wines which was good. Overall it was forward-thinking."



MIDDLE MANAGER

Joanna Pettigrew, 24, of Battersea, South London.
Occupation: estate agent with Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward
Home: rents room in two-bed flat, sharing with owner, at £460 pcm
Income: £24,000 pa (of which £12,500 is commission-based)
Personal pension: No
Vehicle: Golf GTi (company owned)
Annual business mileage: 10,000
Smokes: 5-10 cigarettes a day
Drinks: average 10 units of alcohol a week
Hopes and fears : "I am hoping they will reduce tax on company perks such as cars and mobile phones."
Politics: Rightwing. Voted Conservative in last election.
Effect of the Budget: Jo is about £98 better off per year. Her income tax bill and national insurance contributions fall slightly, but as a smoker and a driver, she loses out.



Reaction: "I am most annoyed by the price of cigarettes going up and by the increase in the price of petrol. As an estate agent, the fact that mortgage interest relief has been abolished is annoying."

NEW DEAL EMPLOYEE

Michael Rochford, 20, of Kennington, South London
Occupation: barrister's clerk, employed under New Deal.
Income: £8,500 a year, of which £3,000 subsidised by the Government.
Marital status: single.
Home: lives at home with family.
Personal pension: No.
Vehicle: moped (Typhoon 125).
Hopes and fears for the Budget: "Concerned that the New Deal will get less funding, then people like me will not get a chance. Petrol duties are also a concern."
Political leanings: has not voted, but would vote Labour.
Effect of Budget: £98.20 a year better off because of increased personal allowance and 10 per cent tax band. Could also benefit from £150 grant for work-related training.



Response: "It's not a big difference, is it? It will all go on petrol. I would like to receive computer training, though, for the administration work I do as a barrister's clerk. At least I can go out and have a drink on the Chancellor."

DISABLED WORKER

Daniel Batten, 26, of Arsenal, North London.
Occupation: editorial assistant for *Disability Now* newspaper.
Income: £15,000 a year plus £54.40 per month disability living allowance for cerebral palsy.
Marital status: single
Home: rents a two-bed council flat for £260 pcm.
Personal pension: pays 3 per cent of his monthly salary into Scope pension scheme.
Contributions are matched by Scope, which owns the magazine.
Drinks: about 15 units of alcohol a week.
Hopes and fears: "That pensions get a boost and people on low incomes get help through tax cuts.



"It sounds very Robin Hood-esque. But I think we should give to the poor."
Politics: Describes himself as an "old-fashioned socialist". Voted Liberal Democrat in the last election "because I didn't recognise Labour in its present guise".
Effect of the Budget: Daniel will be £98.20 a year better off.
Disability allowance likely to rise with inflation. No specific announcement from the Chancellor.
Reaction: "It was pretty interesting that he did not mention a single thing about disability.
"It's very nice to have an extra £100 in your pocket but I'm just worried about five to ten years' time.
"I think it's going to come crashing down because making tax cuts frightens me.
"All we can really thank him for is the extra bottles of beer."

DRINKER AND SMOKER

Elliot Reith, 29, of Borehamwood, Hertfordshire.
Occupation: plumber and drainage engineer.
Income: £16,000 a year.
Marital status: single with two children, Jade, 7, and Connor, 4, from previous relationship.
Home: owns £60,000 house with £58,000 mortgage.
Personal pension: £50 per month into private scheme.
Vehicles: BMW and a Volkswagen van.
Annual business mileage: around 30,000.
Smokes: 10 cigarettes a day.
Drinks: 20 units per week.
Hopes and fears: "I'd like to see petrol taxes come down. Income tax a concern."
Politics: voted Labour.
Effect of Budget: £105.20 per week better off due to changes in income tax bands but worse off by about £10 a week on petrol.



Response: "It's a very good idea to have a tax cut but they didn't do enough to make any difference."

SMALL BUSINESS OWNER

John Brandler, 44, of Brentwood, in Essex.
Occupation: art dealer and owner of Brandler Galleries, employing two staff, with turnover of just under £500,000.
Income: gallery makers average profit of £40,000pa plus £35,000 from personal art dealing.
Marital status: living with partner; no children.
Inheritance: parents in their 80s, so possible sum to come
Home: has lived with partner for 18 years in her own house; no mortgage.
Personal pension: pays £250 monthly into private pension scheme.
Investments: Peps, some shares and savings account.
Vehicle: Volvo estate (privately owned). Owns car park for clients at gallery.



Annual business mileage: up to 12,000.
Hopes and fears: "Hoping for lower import VAT. Would like to see abolition of road tax and equivalent put on petrol duty."
Politics: Conservative with small "c". Voted Labour in last election but regretting it.
Effect of the Budget: business will be £1,775 a year better off through drop in corporation tax but will not feel benefit until 2001.
Response: "This Budget will create more government jobs.
"It's not going to simplify anything for the small businessman. I get so many forms from the Government to fill in. He should have simplified the paperwork.
"It will free up more funds to encourage younger artists. I can spend that money on more speculative purchases. It will encourage me to take risks. That's what this Budget was all about."

Britain should mark millennium ‘by making 2000 the giving year’

This is an edited text of the Chancellor's Budget statement yesterday:

CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH

Today's Budget is a Budget for Britain to succeed in the new economy and lead in the new century: a Budget that builds on a strong foundation of economic stability, advances a modern framework of efficient public services and encourages a dynamic Britain of enterprise and fairness.

With this, the last Budget of the 20th century, we also leave behind the century-long sterile conflicts between governments of the Left that have too often undervalued enterprise and wealth creation — and governments of the Right too often indifferent to public services and fairness.

In contrast this is a Budget built on the central idea that our future depends on enterprise and fairness together. Because enterprise and fairness are founded on securing sound economic fundamentals, this Budget locks in monetary and fiscal stability for the long term.

Because enterprise and fairness depend on modern public services, we are not only providing the £40 billion extra we promised to health and education but today I will announce more money and more capital investment in schools, hospitals, transport and fighting crime.

Because for too long the tax system has undervalued entrepreneurship and investment, we will cut taxes on enterprise. And we will champion the needs of small business and introduce a new competition policy and a new computer strategy for Britain.

Because for too long the tax system has undervalued the family, failing to reward those who take on the most important responsibility of all — bringing up children — we will cut taxes for families, helping parents when they need help most.

STABILITY

Two years ago Britain faced the threat of rapidly rising inflation. So our first priority, and our continuing obligation, has been and is to build a solid foundation of economic stability. Our forecast is for inflation of 2.5 per cent this year, next year and the year after. For the first time in our generation, Britain can look forward to *sustained low inflation.*

In our first week in government, we made the Bank of England independent, freeing *monetary policy from politically-driven* control. Now, because together we are steering a course of stability, long-term *interest rates have come down* from over 7 per cent in May 1997 to 4.5 per cent — our lowest long-term interest rates in over *40* years.

I can confirm our growth estimate for 1999 of 1 per cent to 1.5 per cent, which is what I told the House in November, followed by stronger growth — in 2000 of 2.25 to 2.75 per cent and then in 2001 of 2.75 to 3.25 per cent.

Despite world conditions, more men and women are in jobs than at any time in our history, and unemployment in the last year has been at its lowest rate for 20 years. And because more lone parents are now in work, the numbers claiming out of work benefit — rising for 30 years, over one million when we took office — have now fallen by nearly 100,000.

> **ON EUROPE**
>
> ‘Britain is well within the Maastricht criteria’

As we entered office we inherited a budget deficit of £28 billion. We said in our manifesto we would work within the existing spending *plans for our first two years.*

In our first year the deficit was reduced by £19 billion. In my Budget last year, I promised *we would reduce the deficit further.*

As a result of our prudence, our first two years' spending is £2 billion lower than the spending plans we inherited. This year, the Budget will be in surplus. The current surplus this year is forecast to be £4 billion. And public sector net borrowing will be in surplus by £1 billion — in contrast to the £28 billion deficit we inherited.

I have had to offset the impact of slower world growth on our corporate tax revenues, and lower indirect tax revenues. But, as a result of sound economic management, debt interest payments next year have been cut by £2.5 billion from their previous forecast, *and in total by £4 billion over* the next three years.

Because less of our social security budget is being wasted *on paying for past failures in* employment policy, social security spending as a whole has not been rising as in previous years . . . *freeing resources for* new help for families and pensioners.

I can report that the entire *£40 billion investment in* health and in education will be fully delivered and will be delivered fully within our fiscal rules. Not only *that, but still* meeting the test of fiscal prudence I will today allocate from our Capital Modernisation Fund even more investment for hospitals and schools. Even after all the measures in today's Budget, next year's current surplus is expected to be £1 billion higher than previously forecast — and £1 billion more in 2000-2001. For the coming five years the current surpluses are forecast to be — successively — £2 billion, 4, 8, 9 and £11 billion.

Debt as a proportion of national income has already fall*en from the 44 per cent we in*herited to under 41 per cent this year, and it will fall below 40 per cent to 39.5 per cent next *year, then to 38, then to 37 per* cent in 2001-2002.

For the coming five years, the estimated current Budget surplus totals plus £34 billion — in contrast with the last Government's deficit over the last economic cycle of minus £149 billion and the last Government's doubling of the national debt.

So, as we cut debt payments and the bills of economic failure, I will further lock in the fiscal tightening we have achieved over the last two years. I will continue to meet our fiscal rules, and I am also able, with my Budget meas*ures today, to boost purchas*ing power over the next three *years* by £6 billion at exactly the right time for the economy.

Even after these *measures* take effect, public sector net borrowing will be lower than previously forecast in each of *the next three years — at £3 bil*lion in the coming year, and then 3, 1, 3 and £4 billion in the years after.

*And for those who take a spe*cial interest in European issues — in particular the Maastricht Treaty — I can confirm *that Britain is well within* the Maastricht criteria.

I have often told this House that our prudence is for a pur*pose. And so I am now able to* announce a new boost to purchasing power of £6 billion over the next three years as a *result of my Budget measures:* net tax cuts of £4 billion targeted to working families; and on top of that, for families and public spending, more than £2 billion of additional public investments.

And I will also today announce major allocations from our £2.5 billion Capital Modernisation Fund, adding more resources to the extra £40 billion we have already committed to invest in health and education over the next three years.

ENTERPRISE

Britain must make a quantum leap in skills, innovation, competition, information technology and small business. So today, we bring forward seven major reforms for a new enterprise economy open to all.

■ First, tax cuts for business. So that more businesses — *large and small — will invest,* grow and prosper, so that the many and not just the few will have the chance of starting *businesses, we today cut busi*ness taxes, and introduce a special enterprise management incentive scheme to reward the risk takers.

I confirm that from April 1 we will further reduce the main rate of corporation tax from 31p to 30p, the lowest rate in the history of British corporation tax, the lowest rate of any major country in Europe and the lowest rate of any major industrialised country anywhere, including Japan and the United States.

When we came into Government, small companies tax was 23p. In my first Budget, to *encourage enterprise and in*vestment, we reduced it to 21p, backdated to April 1997. From April this year the rate will be *20p: 350,000 companies will* benefit.

I believe the whole House will want to welcome what I *announce today — a new start*ing tax rate for small business of 10p in the pound. Every company making profits up to *£50,000 will benefit.*

The legislation will ensure that the beneficiaries are genuinely those who take risks. *And 85 per cent of the firms* gaining from the new 10p tax rate have fewer than ten employees — the very firms we *most want to see grow,* the very firms whose growth will create the greatest number of new jobs.

*Where we inherited busi*ness tax rates of 33p and 23p, the rates will now be 30, 20 and 10.

I am particularly keen to strengthen the ability of manufacturing industry to invest in new equipment and new tech*nology with targeted tax ad*vantages for doing so. And so I will set aside an additional £325 million to allow small *and medium-sized companies* to write off 40 per cent of all they invest in the coming year.

In other areas I am extending the tax allowance *for new* films made in Britain. And the shipping industry has put to me the case for enhanced train*ing incentives and for a lower* rate ring-fenced tonnage tax.

■ Second, I propose a tax reform that will reward risk and *stimulate new enterprise* at the cutting edge of technology. In the past, share option schemes, subsidised by the taxpayer, have rewarded those already at the top whose risks are low and rewards already high — such as utility chief executives often operating in a monopoly environment.

Tomorrow I will publish details of a very *different kind of* targeted tax cut for those who are prepared to move from secure jobs and venture their time and effort to create wealth for our country. The new enterprise management incentive will allow the award of equity worth up to £100,000 for success in building up the new path-breaking companies our economy needs.

I now announce the level at which capital gains tax will begin. There is no requirement for me to raise the threshold. But I have decided to do so. *For all individuals, from* April, the first £7,100 will be free of capital gains tax. This measure will exempt 10,000 *more people from capital* gains tax altogether. Britain now has the lowest long-term rate of capital gains tax with *the most generous threshold* in its history.

I now turn to the rate and threshold for inheritance tax. The rate *will* be unchanged and fewer people will pay the tax as I raise the threshold by £8,000 to £231,000. Ninety-seven per cent of *estates will now* be exempt from tax.

■ Third, targeted tax cuts and public investment to put Brit*ain and British enterprise at* the forefront of innovation. I propose a new R&D tax credit which will give new business *and small business — the big*gest source of innovative ideas — cash help to research and develop their innovations even before they make their first *profits.*

> **ON BUSINESS**
>
> ‘Britain must make a quantum leap in skills and IT’

At a cost of £150 million a year, this targeted tax cut will underwrite almost one third of research and development costs for small business. Britain now has one of the best incentives for innovation anywhere in the industrialised world.

The seedbed is basic science. *I can announce* a £100 *million* new investment in university science laboratories and equipment, part of our £1 billion upgrading of British science.

To transform British inventions into British-made products, I propose a 30 per cent increase to £65 million in the budget of our University Challenge Fund. To encourage large companies to invest venture capital in innovative small companies we will tomorrow publish proposals for a new corporate tax incentive. To ensure the necessary flow *of finance to high-risk compa*nies, I am allocating £20 million for start-up funding for high-tech venture capital *funds for England, Scotland,* Wales and Northern Ireland.

■ Fourth, a new competition policy for Britain. It is time for *more competition and lower* prices in basic essentials like the utilities, financial services, indeed the whole range of consumer goods, where too often British people are paying far more than they should for what they need to buy. It is wholly *unacceptable* that consumer goods can still cost up to twice as much in Britain as in America.

With the setting aside of 20 per cent extra resources, the Office of Fair Trading will now be charged with a proactive remit to root out cartels and restrictive behaviour. Obstructing investigations will be a criminal offence.

The *Deputy Prime Minister* will review competition in airports and in the water industry. The Financial Services Au*thority will publish league ta*bles of costs and charges in savings, insurance and pension products, to guarantee a *better deal for consumers* and to avoid the misselling of the past. To help homeowners, all building societies and banks will, *for the first time,* be obliged to publish reliable price information on mortgages.

■ Fifth, to match our small *business tax cuts with a new* champion for small business in government, we will simplify help for small businesses and establish, for the first time in our country, a single Small Business Service.

This one-stop, open-door service — the Small Business Service — will have new resources to offer loan guarantees, *support innovation,* advise on electronic commerce and deliver, for the first time, an automated payroll service to help new *small* companies starting out.

Small businesses who file their tax returns electronically will be offered a discount.

■ Sixth, to open Britain's economy to the enterprise of all, we propose employee shares for all. Employees will be able, for the first time, to buy shares in their own companies from their pre-tax income. Every employer will be able to match, tax-free, what each employee buys.

■ Seventh, new targeted tax cuts and public investment to equip all our companies and all our people for the newest and most decisive economic challenge of the 21st century — mastering information technologies, from the PC to the internet, from e-mail to e-commerce.

> **ON COMPUTING**
>
> ‘We will be able to loan computers as libraries lent out books’

So today, we allocate an additional £0.5 billion from our Capital Modernisation Fund to launch a £1.7 billion computers for all initiative, a nationwide effort enlisting schools, colleges and companies, public and private sectors across the board to make Britain a *leader* in the information economy. Our target is a national network of 1,000 computer learning centres, one for every community in Britain.

Our targets for the new economy are ambitious. Within three years, one million small businesses able to benefit from e-commerce. 32,000 schools connected to the internet, with 370,000 teachers computer-trained. New help worth £20 million making it possible for more teachers to have computers for home use.

To bring more computers into more British homes, we will legislate so that employees will be able *to borrow* computers from their companies as a tax-free benefit. We will pioneer a system under which local partnerships will be able to loan computers and software in the new century the way local libraries have loaned books in the last century. From this year a million men and women will start to receive £150 to set up their own Individual Learning Accounts — putting the power to plan and prepare for their own careers in their own hands. In this Budget we expand Individual Learning Accounts and open up tax-free learning in computers, in basic skills and advanced skills, to millions *more.* We will legislate *so that* employers will be able to contribute tax-free to the new Individual Learning Accounts. Em*ployees will also pay no* tax on such payments.

Any adult with an Individual Learning Account will be *able* to claim a discount of 20 per cent, an additional grant of up to £100, on the cost of their learning. For all adults signing up to improve on their basic education — including computer literacy — there will be a discount of 80 per cent on course fees.

And we will pay for this measure in tax-free learning by phasing out existing Vocational Tax Relief which has been subsidising non-vocational courses like diving and flying lessons.

ENVIRONMENT

Our Government's target is to reduce greenhouse emissions by 12.5 per cent by 2010. And today I will announce a programme of measures that will cut carbon pollution by 3 million tonnes.

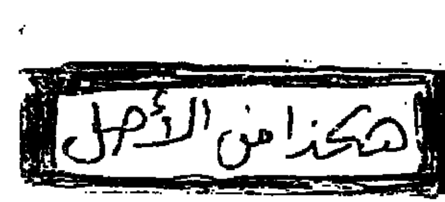
My first proposal alone will reduce carbon pollution by 1.5 million tonnes. We will introduce a levy on business use of energy from April 2001. And it will be brought in on a revenue neutral basis, with no overall increase in the burden of taxation on business. Because we intend at the same time to cut the main rate of *employers'* national insurance contributions from 12.2 to 11.7 per cent.

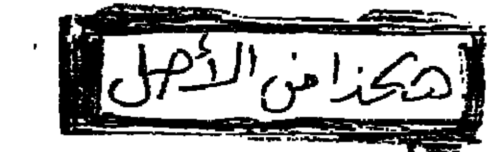
We also intend to set significantly lower rates *of tax for en*ergy intensive sectors that improve their energy efficiency. Today we are inviting them to *submit* their proposals. In pursuit of our policies for sustainable development we will also allocate an extra £50 million to encourage business to invest in new environmental technologies and in renewable fuels.

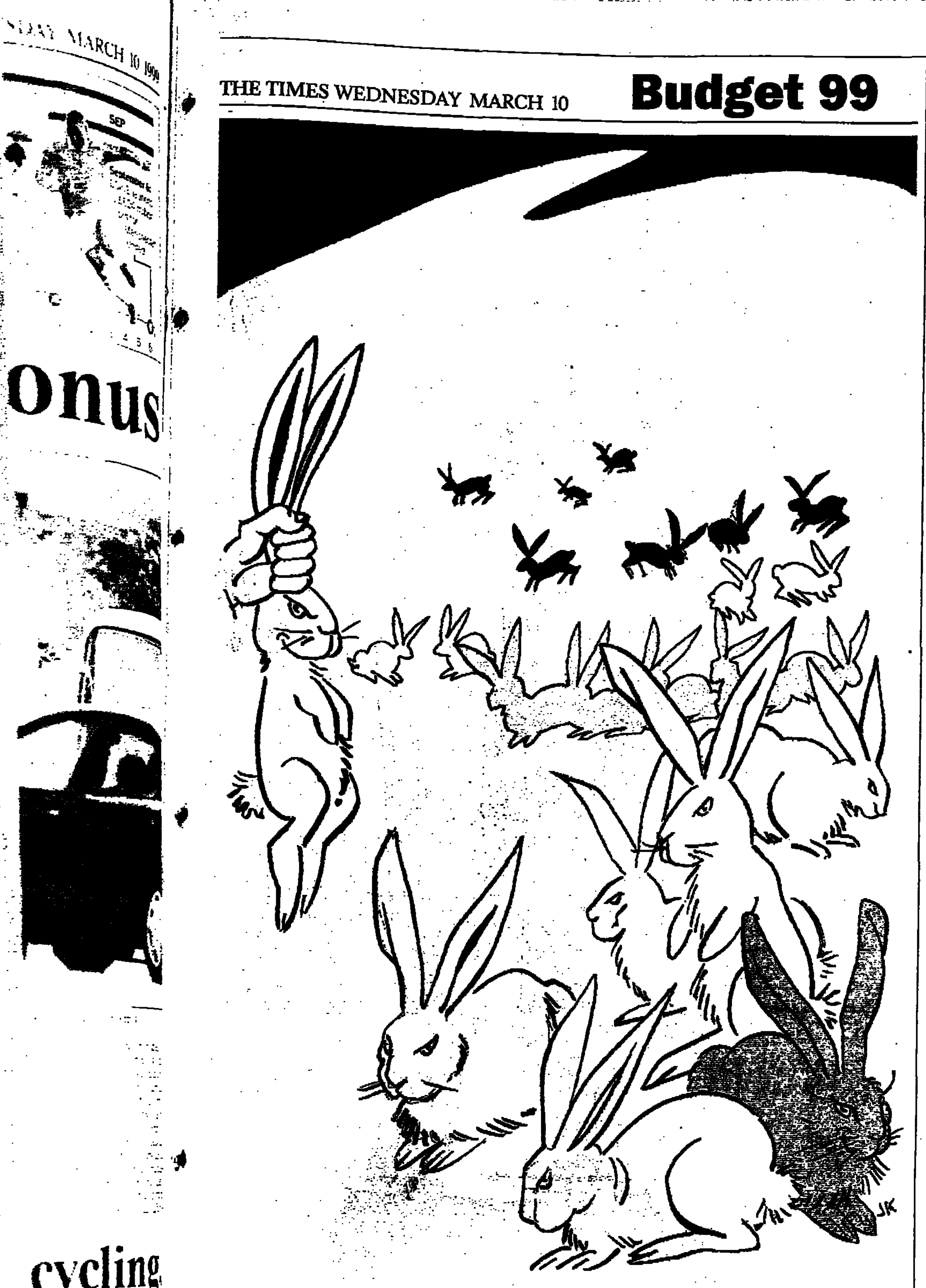
In line with the fuel escalator first introduced by the previous Government at 5 per cent above inflation and now 6

continued on facing page









From facing page

per cent, petrol duty will rise from 6pm today. Vehicle Excise Duty for smaller cars will, from June 1 this year, be cut by £55 — the first cut in the licence fee in 50 years. Other cars' rates are only increased in line with inflation.

I will freeze Vehicle Excise Duties for 98 per cent of all lorries, and for lorries and buses with clean engines I am cutting the licence fee by up to £1,000.

Last year, to encourage a switch to cleaner fuels, I promised to give an additional tax advantage to ultra-low sulphur diesel. By the end of the year almost all producers will have switched to this cleaner fuel. This alone will cut emissions by 20 per cent. At a revenue cost of over £400 million a year I will maintain the favourable tax treatment for cleaner diesel.

I propose a reform to reward the use of fuel-efficient company cars and remove today's counter-productive incentive to drive more miles in order to get bigger discounts. So I start in this Budget with a measure that will cost the company car user with a typical car around £1 a week. This reform — to link tax to emissions — will be implemented in 2002 on a revenue-neutral basis.

Further, to reduce pollution, employees will from this year be able for the first time to secure tax-free the benefits from employer-run or employer-subsidised buses, car-sharing schemes and other environmentally-friendly means of transport to work.

Last year we set up a new rural transport fund. To build on its success in extending the range of public transport services in rural communities we will now increase funding for the next two years by 20 per cent to £120 million. To reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, the landfill tax, £10 per tonne in 1999, will, in future, rise by £1 per tonne per year.

Taking into account all these tax changes and all the changes I have yet to announce there will be a net tax cut of £4 billion in this Budget.

FAMILIES

Children are 20 per cent of the British people but 100 per cent of Britain's future. To build that future, this Budget provides a better deal for families and children. So we will replace the married couple's allowance with a new family tax cut that will increase the amount that goes to help families with children. This children's tax credit will give more — not less — help to families at the time they need it most, when they have their children and when their children are growing up.

Today's pensioner couples will retain the married couple's allowance. And couples without children or whose children have grown up will benefit from other changes I will shortly announce.

The married couple's allowance is now worth £190 to married couples. The children's tax credit, the tax cut for families, to be introduced from April 2001, will be worth £416, and as a result the typical family with children will be over £200 a year better off.

In the Budget last year I set down the two principles that govern my approach: that we must substantially increase support for families with children and we must do so in the fairest way.

It is in fulfilment of these two principles that the children's tax credit will be tapered away for the higher-earning family where there is a top-rate taxpayer.

In the light of this reform, my Budget decision is that child benefit will not be taxed for taxpayers on the basic rate — or the top rate. When we came to power, child benefit for the first child was £11.45 a week. Next month it will rise to £14.40 a week. It has risen by 25 per cent since we came to Government — an increase of £150 a year.

I now propose a further increase in child benefit, well above the rate of inflation. It will rise next April to £15 a week for the first child, £780 a year. I will also raise the rate for the second and further children to £10 a week. With the children's tax credit added to child benefit, families who were receiving £11 a week in 1997 for their first child will be receiving £23 a week, £1,200 a year. And taking all our reforms together the maximum support for the first child will be £40 a week, £2,000 a year for families when they need it most. Every child in the country in every family will get more — not less — support under this system, support ranging from £780 a year to £2,000 a year. And every child will receive more year on year.

Our long-term goal is to bring together the different strands of our support for children in the working families tax credit, in income support and in our children's tax credit and create an integrated and seamless system of child financial support paid to the mother, building upon the foundation of universal child benefit.

I have also considered the alternative case that has been advocated, for a transferable tax allowance for mothers who stay at home. The better deal for mothers who stay at home is what we are doing from October this year — the working families tax credit. A family with two children on £15,000 a year where the mother stays at home, would have received nothing under the old system of family credit. Transferable tax allowances would give them £997. Under the working families tax credit they will receive £1,460.

> **ON CHILDREN**
>
> 'They are 20 per cent of people but 100 per cent of the future'

Where both parents need to work, we need to do more to help them balance the demands of making a living and having children.

With a million new childcare places now being created and from October our new childcare tax credit set at a maximum of £70 for one child and £105 for two children, Britain has a national childcare strategy for the first time in our history.

From December 1999 all parents will be entitled to three months unpaid leave for each child. But currently up to 15 per cent of working mothers-to-be are not entitled to any maternity pay. This is wrong. Today's Budget will ensure that all mothers in work earning £30 a week or more 95 per cent of all women in work — are entitled to maternity pay and to 18 weeks of maternity pay.

Every year a quarter of a million children, even at the minute they are born, are born into poverty. This too is wrong. Our Sure Start Programme for the under-threes, beginning next month, will ensure that the full resources of health visitors, primary care and schools are there to give every young child a better chance.

Today I can announce a new Sure Start Maternity Grant for the newborn: government offering more help to parents in return for parents meeting their responsibilities. Help amounting to £200 will be conditional, linked to keeping appointments for child health advice and check-ups.

THE ELDERLY

Today I announce new measures to help all pensioners: for those who are poor, for those with incomes above benefit level who are not wealthy, indeed for every retired person and every retired couple, taxpayers and non-taxpayers alike — a better deal in the minimum pension guarantee, in the winter allowance, and on savings and tax.

This Government created a minimum income guarantee for pensioners. Today I can confirm that next April this minimum income guarantee will be increased not just in line with prices but in line with earnings.

As a result of the changes we are making, the minimum income guarantee for the single pensioner will be £78 a week, nearly £500 a year higher than when this Government came to office. Pensioner couples will have a minimum income guarantee of over £121 a week, nearly £800 higher a year than in 1997.

I can announce today that we will do more. The winter allowance is currently paid to all eight million elderly households at £20. I have decided to raise it — to £100 — for all eight million elderly households. To help the elderly get more out of their savings I have asked National Savings to issue a new pensioners bond. With the shorter term de

continued on page 18

NOVEMBER — DECEMBER — JANUARY 1999

Mortgage rates

Bank base rates

November 7: United News and Media and Carlton, the TV station, joins the football bidding fray with attempts to purchase a stake in Arsenal

November 27: Martin Taylor, the chief executive of Barclays Bank, resigns shortly after the bank reveals £340 million of loans to Russia

December 8: Zeneca, the British biotechnology company, confirms that it is in merger talks with the Swedish pharmaceuticals giant, Astra

ZENECA

December 10: Royal Doulton, the china manufacturer, announces that it is laying off 1,200 people

December 15: The Government unveils its plans for pension reforms, including the introduction of stakeholder pension schemes for the self-employed or those who change jobs often

January 1: The euro makes a smooth debut, but ends its first week of trading down against the pound

Hague attacks 'stealthy tax' on businesses

THE OPPOSITION REPLY

By Mark Inglefield
Political Reporter

WILLIAM HAGUE accused Gordon Brown of being a "pickpocket Chancellor" who was raising taxes by stealth.

While the Tory leader welcomed some of the new measures, including the reduction in the standard rate of income tax, he accused the Chancellor of punishing savers and paralysing business with new taxes and regulations.

"He is the pickpocket Chancellor who shakes your hand with a smile after he has stealthily removed your wallet," Mr Hague said in his immediate Commons reaction to Mr Brown's budget.

"As we already know, this is a Government that says one thing and does another, that takes a pound and gives a few pennies back."

The Tory leader criticised the Government for failing to cut welfare bills, and complained that he had not introduced a programme to curb union power and to increase labour market flexibility.

"He should have been attacking the forest of regulation that is strangling business, but he didn't," he said.

Mr Hague added that experts would be "astonished" by Mr Brown's forecasts for GDP growth.

"Behind the statistics of an economic slowdown, we see families under pressure, businesses struggling in a manufacturing sector which you will have further hit today," he said.

But Mr Hague welcomed the Government's plan to introduce research and development credits, while emphasising that the Tories would want to examine the details behind the scheme.

Mr Hague contradicted the Chancellor's assertion that the Budget would benefit families, saying: "It is good for families who don't have a mortgage, who aren't married, who don't run a car, who don't smoke, who don't save for a pension. There may even be a family like that somewhere in the country. Sounds suspiciously like you to me."

Pointing to the Budget, Mr Hague argued: "You might have said in your Budget speech what is the total rise in the tax burdens as a result of your decisions. You had over an hour, we had a lot of other waffle, but you forgot to mention that. That was the line that you missed out."

Mr Hague accused the Prime Minister of "a total betrayal" for admitting last week that the tax burden would rise, despite his pre-election pledge that it would not.

To Mr Brown he said: "The truth after three budgets is that the total of taxation is still rising and you didn't have the guts in the Budget speech to say so. You are not only an expert on stealth taxes, you are an expert on giving a stealth speech."

Referring to Mr Blair's assertion that he wanted the British economy to be more like the American one, Mr Hague said: "Where is the American dream? Where is the radical plan to reduce welfare bills? So far you have added £40 billion to welfare bills. America is cutting its welfare bills.

"The bad news from today's Budget is that you are still tinkering, that the whole of business in this country is your laboratory and that you still don't know what the real world is."

Mr Hague said that Mr Brown had done nothing to alleviate the impact of "stealth" taxes on Britain's savings, and that there had been a "dramatic fall" in the savings ratio from 11 per cent to 7.5 per cent over the past two years.

Paddy Ashdown, the leader of the Liberal Democrats, said that Mr Brown could have done "big things" in the Budget, but had decided instead "to follow a scattergun approach and do a number of smaller things".

Mr Ashdown accused the Chancellor of mounting a "selective smash-and-grab raid" on his party's ideas, but said the Budget had not gone far enough in tackling poverty. "Over this Parliament, the Government would have invested less in health and education than the Tories originally intended," he said.



STUART CONWAY

Mr Hague accused the Chancellor of increasing the taxpayer's burden and paralysing business with new taxes and regulations

Keeping tabs on kitchen table Conservatism

Tim Hames on how Hague met his voter-friendly targets

WILLIAM HAGUE said earlier this week that Tory policy must meet seven voter-friendly criteria, which he called "kitchen table Conservatism", inspired by Republican success in America in reconnecting with the grassroots.

Here we assess his Budget response speech and how it matches his criteria.

Accessible language
The Tory leader stuck carefully to his simple formula: a strong emphasis on the "persecution" of the motorist, especially those doing "the school run". His prolonged analysis of the declining savings ratio may have sent eyes swivelling around the kitchen table. A passionate analysis of the shipping industry's difficulties might have been similarly received.

Listening
Accused the Chancellor of not listening much to industry. Intimated that he was closer to the concerns of ordinary families.

Future not past
No real indication of what the Tories would have done if he were in power. Did spent a seemingly excessive amount of time savaging the 1997 and 1998 budgets.

Concede and move on
Unclear whether or not he thought that the last Tory Government had been wrong to run down mortgage interest tax relief and the married couples allowance or whether Gordon Brown was incorrect in completing that process.

For things, not against them
Welcomed the new 10p tax rate, the income tax rate cut for next year, the cuts in corporation and small business taxes, the research and development tax credit, proposals for enhanced employee share ownership and lower employer NI contributions. He took near-exclusive credit for the Chancellor's retreat on taxing child benefit.

Keep a sense of proportion
Hyperbole broadly under control. Although he did claim that Mr Brown's savings policy was "an emerging disaster" and that taxes on businesses and people were "soaring". A curious mixed metaphor about "forests" of regulation "strangling" enterprise.

Integrity
Strongly hinted that neither the Prime Minister nor the Chancellor has any.

Tax on tobacco helps to pay for better deal for pensioners

CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH

continued from page 17
posits that pensioners want, this new bond will offer the returns that pensioners need.

And for pensioners I have decided to raise the personal tax allowance in excess of inflation. Single pensioners will not pay any tax until they have an income of £5,720. Older pensioner couples who both use their personal allowances to the full will now not pay tax until they have incomes above £15,000: 200,000 more pensioners will not have to pay income tax. Now, in total, two thirds of pensioners will not have to pay income tax.

Taken together the measures I have already announced add up to an additional £3 billion, a better deal for the elderly that makes the typical pensioner household £240 a year better off.

To help pay for this, from today excise duty on tobacco will rise by the normal escalator, 5 per cent above inflation. Organised smuggling, which is now a £1.5 billion pound a year racket, will not be permitted to undo a policy on cigarettes which successive British Governments have adopted for good and urgent health reasons. As the Government strengthens its anti-smuggling strategy, we will target new resources to detect, prevent and punish this costly form of organised crime. I have decided to freeze the duty on spirits, on beer and on wine at its current level.

> **ON ELDERLY**
> 'The typical pensioner household will be £240 a year better off'

There will be no tax rise on alcohol this side of the millennium.

And I will cut the tax on pools from March 28 by one third, from 26.5 per cent down to 17.5 per cent. On this basis the pools companies have agreed future funding of around £20 million a year for the Football Trust and the Foundation for Sport and the Arts.

Insurance premium tax will rise by 1p in the pound from July 1, although 80 per cent of insurance underwritten in Britain will remain exempt. On VAT, today I propose there will be no increase in rates and no extension of VAT.

I have also decided to make no change to stamp duty on property sales up to £250,000. For property sales above that, the rates will be raised by 0.5 per cent from next Tuesday.

The Prime Minister has rightly called for our age to become a Giving Age. I want us to mark the Millennium in the best way, by making 2000 the giving year.

In the last Budget we introduced Millennium Gift Aid. For every £100 a British citizen donates to Third World causes before the end of 2000, the Government will contribute £30. When Millennium Gift Aid is launched on March 18, I urge British people to give more to those who have too little. We propose extending the tax advantages of Millennium Gift Aid. We propose that every charity, national and international, should be able to benefit from this new tax relief.

We propose in future for every £100 a British citizen donates to any charity, the Government will contribute £30.

WORK

Most fundamentally the tax reforms of this Budget provide a better deal for the hard working majority — a ladder of opportunity for those who want to work their way up, a chance to keep more of what they earn and, for all, a fundamental guarantee that work will pay.

Our reforms in national insurance will give employers an overall tax cut of £1.5 billion and employees an overall tax cut on work of £2.5 billion — an average of £130 per year per employee. I am abolishing the perverse tax on work, the entry fee every employee has to pay simply to be part of the national insurance system. From this tax cut on work worth over £1.4 billion a year, every one of 20 million employees will gain £69 a year.

Over two financial years, I will further align the starting point with that of income tax so that no one will have to pay either national insurance or income tax for the first £87 of their weekly earnings.

From April 2001 therefore the lower limit for employees, self-employed and employers national insurance will be harmonised at £87 a week, the same as income tax. As with the lower earnings limit which is rising faster than inflation, the upper limit will rise to £575 and to complete our reforms we will also align employers national insurance and income tax in the treatment of benefits in kind.

I also propose to extend to the self-employed national insurance rights to the full maternity allowance. Again, to implement the recommendations of the Taylor Report, we will align national insurance arrangements for the self-employed closer to those of employees: reducing the unfair entry fee from £6.35 a week to £2, and setting the Class Four threshold at the same point as the personal income tax allowance. But I will set contributions at a lower rate than envisaged by the Taylor Report, at 7 per cent in contrast with the 10 per cent employees pay.

> **ON JOBS**
> 'Our New Deal for 1999 is better provision but tougher conditions'

Two hundred and thirty thousand young people are already benefiting from the New Deal. Now we must bring in those young unemployed who, for whatever reason, have yet to join.

I say to them, this will be our New Deal for 1999: better provision but tougher conditions. Our responsibility is to offer training and intensive coaching. In return their responsibility is to come into the New Deal, get the skills and prepare to take up a job.

To help lone parents make the transition into jobs, benefits will continue when they first start work. For them and others the working families tax credit will make work pay more than benefits.

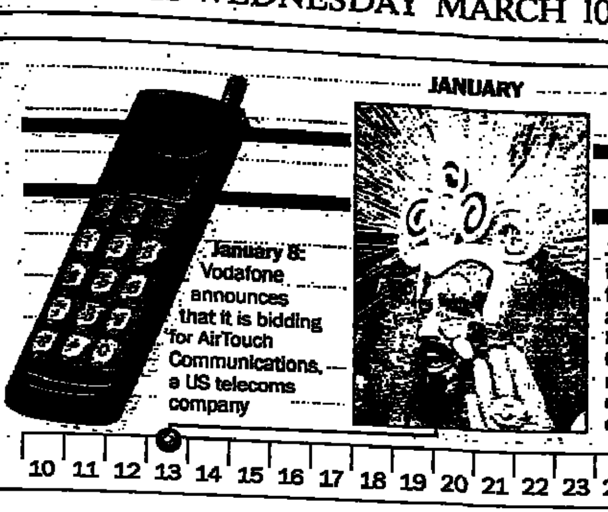
Every working family will be guaranteed a minimum income, to be introduced in October not at the previously announced rate of £190 a week but at £200 a week, more than £10,000 a year. No income tax will be paid until earnings reach £235 a week. This is a tax cut available to 1.4 million families helping 3 million children.

I now propose that over time we extend this principle. The old tax system set a personal allowance that failed to ensure that work paid, and also made thousands pay tax even as they were forced to claim

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JANUARY — FEBRUARY — MARCH

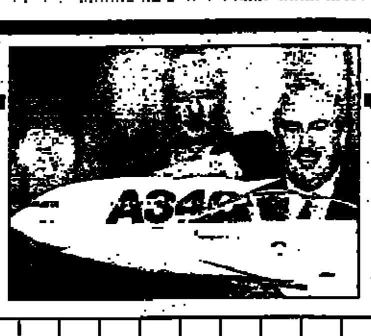


January 8: Vodafone announces that it is bidding for AirTouch Communications, a US telecoms company

January 13: There is further turmoil in financial markets after Brazil's central bank governor, Gustavo Franco, resigns and Brazil's currency, the real, devalues

January 17: Dun & Bradstreet quarterly survey shows export confidence up 5 per cent

February 5: Hopes that Rover's Longbridge plant at Birmingham might be saved recede after the only BMW board member to support the plant, Bernd Pischetsrieder, resigns



February 9: British Aerospace says that it may have to start closing its Royal Ordnance factories as part of a rationalisation programme ahead of its merger with GEC

March 2: A report finds that earnings across the economy have risen 4.5 per cent in the year to November - the maximum compatible with Labour's inflation targets for the year

Friends will enjoy bigger slice of pizza

The Chancellor's regular dinner companions will fare well on his Budget, reports Jon Ashworth

IT MAKES for the perfect new Labour dinner party. There sit Gavyn and Sue, millionaire economist and Treasury confidante, and Ed and Yvette, the (nearly) newlyweds with their eye on high office. Holding court raucously in the corner is Charlie Whelan, the nicotine-fuelled "master of spin", while Geoffrey Robinson looks on, flanked by his fragrant, pearl-encrusted wife, Marie Elena.

At the head of the table sits Gordon Brown, pondering how he ever came to count such a group as among his closest friends. His girlfriend, Sarah Macaulay, is thinking, "Who needs enemies?" The air is thick with the smell of money. The talk is of football.

The Chancellor enjoys pizza and football evenings with his friends, and has done his best to accommodate them, judging by a Budget that spares drinkers and does much for families, small businesses and the self-employed.

There was much in the Budget speech about married couples and children — in deference, no doubt, to that most golden of couples, Gavyn Davies and Sue Nye. Mr Davies, 48, the chief international economist at the investment bank Goldman Sachs, will have liked what the Chancellor had to say about helping couples with young families.

His wife, Sue, is Mr Brown's personal assistant. The couple have three young children, one of whom, Ben, made the front pages before last year's Budget when Mr Brown gatecrashed his birthday party. Ben refused to smile, even when enticed with a piece of cake. Still, there is to be no tax on child benefits for higher-rate taxpayers.

As it is, Mr Brown has spared Mr Davies a potential £5 million tax bill through changes to capital gains tax introduced last year. As a partner in Goldman Sachs, Mr Davies stands to gain about £30 million in shares when the bank is floated. If he waits ten years before selling, the tax payable falls from 40 per cent to 24 per cent. This will trim the bill from £12 million to £7.2 million.

Increasing stamp duty on properties worth more than £250,000 could be an issue for Mr Davies. Success has brought two substantial homes, one in Blairite Islington and the other — Baggy House — on a clifftop in north Devon with its own Hollywood-style pink-and-blue swimming pool. But all this talk about encouraging investment in your own shares will have struck a chord.

References to helping the elderly get more out of their savings may well have been inspired by Geoffrey Robinson, the former Paymaster General. Tony Blair has twice enjoyed family holidays at Mr Robinson's £3 million villa in Tuscany, which has its own church and cottages. There is also a house in Surrey with its own concert hall, and the 20-bedroomed Marsh Court in Hampshire, where Marie Elena passes the week with her two great danes. Mr Robinson, 60, spends the week in an apartment at the Grosvenor House hotel, the venue for those fun-filled pizza nights. There is also a £1.2 million flat in Cannes. Like Mr Davies, Mr Robinson stands to benefit from the more lenient capital gains tax regime on any future sale of his onshore assets.

He is the beneficiary of a £13 million Guernsey-based offshore trust set up for him by Joska Bourgeois, a glamorous Belgian widow. Embarrassingly, the connection was flushed out just as the Government threatened action on tax-dodging millionaires.

Home improvements and clothing allowances are of undoubted interest to Marie Elena. She has spent a fortune redesigning Marsh Court (the music room is resplendent in turquoise, gold and pink) and is given to turning up at weddings in figure-hugging gold lamé. Raising the inheritance tax threshold will have gone down well with their two grown-up children, Margot Veronique and Alexander.

Scrapping the married couples' allowance may not go down quite so well with Ed Balls, the Chancellor's special economic adviser, and his wife, Yvette Cooper, the MP for Pontefract and Castleford. The couple celebrated their first wedding anniversary in January and are classic dinkies (double income, no kids), but now have every incentive to get on with having children.

A former leader writer at the *Financial Times*, Mr Balls, 32, helped to craft Labour innovations such as the windfall tax and an independent Bank of England. He supports Norwich City and is fond of English choral music. Ms Cooper, 29, lists painting portraits (badly, in her own words) and watching soap operas among her interests. Promised investment in public infrastructure is an issue here: the Ballses travel up to Pontefract by train on Fridays.

Mr Balls is a smoker, but his vices pale next to Labour's leading reprobate, the chain-smoking, hard-drinking Charlie Whelan. Freezing duties on beer, spirits and wine will go down well at the Red Lion.

Mr Whelan is well up on mortgages, having been blamed for leaking details of Peter Mandelson's £373,000 home loan, and will have nodded agreeably at the proposals on Miras and stamp duty. He resigned as a special adviser to Mr Brown in January. Now self-employed — making him a winner yet again in the Budget — he presents television and radio programmes and has been contemplating writing a book about the Treasury.

Measures aimed at helping small businesses will have gone down a treat with the Chancellor's girlfriend, Sarah Macaulay, 35. Her public relations company, Hobsbawm Macaulay Communications, has just 20 employees, making it a prime candidate for Labour largesse. Small businesses are being encouraged to invest in research and development, helped by a new 10p starting tax rate and an ability to write off investments.

Ms Macaulay could hardly have failed to notice all the references to children. Despite perennial rumours of impending marriage, the couple are not engaged and appear in no hurry to tie the knot, but one begins to wonder. Children, Mr Brown declared, are Britain's future. Families need help at a time when children are growing up. The family tax credit will help families with young children.

No guessing the topic of conversation at the next Brown dinner party.



Pizza, anyone? Mr Brown welcomes, from left, the Robinsons, Sarah Macaulay, Charlie Whelan, Ed Balls and Yvette Cooper and, front, Sue Nye and Gavyn Davies

More for NHS and schools

CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH

continued from facing page
benefits. Not just families but all who work will be guaranteed a minimum income, and this minimum income will be paid through targeted tax cuts and credits.

We start in this Budget with a minimum income guarantee. A new deal, for over 50s returning to work. Nearly 30 per cent of men over 50 are outside the Labour force.

For those unemployed for six months or more, we will create a new employment credit which will guarantee a minimum income of £9,000 a year, for their first year back in full-time work, at least £170 a week.

TAXATION

We said in our manifesto that we would introduce a 10p starting rate of income tax for individuals when it was prudent to do so.

However, I have to tell the House that this 10p rate will not start in April 2000, like other income tax changes we are making today. It is prudent, instead, for people to get the benefit of the 10p starting rate now.

So it will take effect in April 1999, a 10p starting rate on the first £1,500 of income, the lowest starting rate of tax since 1962, and it will be delivered a few weeks from today. People will see it in their pay packets in May.

Nearly two million people will see their income tax bills cut in half, and take home 90p of every pound they earn.

The new income tax structure will this year be 10p, 23p, and 40p. And income tax allowances, income limits and tax thresholds will rise as usual in line with inflation. The tax rates on savings will remain unchanged.

So this is a Budget with a 10p starting rate of income tax. A 10p starting rate of small business tax, a 10p long term rate for capital gains tax. The maximum small business tax is now down to 20p and corporate tax for big companies down to 30p. The tax burden on the typical family with children will fall below 20 per cent for the first time in 20 years.

PUBLIC SERVICES

After long years of neglect, step by step this Government is rebuilding Britain's public services. On top of the £40 billion extra we are already investing in education and health, we will today allocate increased resources for our key public services. We have identified specific areas where step changes can be made through additional investment from the Capital Modernisation Fund.

We are allocating an additional £170 million for crime prevention in areas where crime is highest. The Home Secretary will make a detailed statement to the House.

For public transport, in addition to the rural transport fund, we will make a further allocation to be announced by the Deputy Prime Minister. For Northern Ireland, today we allocate additional capital spending of £50 million, for Wales of £80 million, for Scotland of £165 million. Full details of new investments will be given by the Secretaries of State.

ON TAX

‘Nearly two million will see income tax bills cut in half’

The £19 billion extra we are already providing for education will finance smaller class sizes, more nursery education, better pay for better teachers, our drive to improve literacy and numeracy — and we will help 700,000 more young people to go on to further and higher education.

But, so that every child will have that chance, we need specific and targeted help for our inner city schools. For upgrading their technology, the Secretary of State for Education will receive an additional £100 million.

And for every school we will not only invest in new technology; as a result of our prudence in the last year, and following the huge take-up of the additional money provided last year, we are able this month to make another extra and larger allocation for school books: £2,000 to every school in every constituency in every part of the country, immediate new resources of £60 million for a total of ten million new books in all.

THE NHS

Twenty-one billion pounds extra money is making possible the largest hospital building programme since the war: £1 billion investment in modern technology in the health service; the recruitment of 7,000 new doctors; 15,000 more nurses; and a fair pay award for nurses. The Government's new programme, NHS Direct, is a proven success. And later this week the Secretary of State for Health will announce detailed proposals not only to extend it to all of the country by the end of next year, but to carry NHS Direct right into communities — with a network of health centres and drop-in centres where people can get immediate advice about treatment.

We have already provided additional resources for upgrading one third of all accident and emergency units that need modernisation. Today we go further. We today make an additional and immediate cash allocation, to be spent in *the next twelve months, for the* upgrading of every single accident and emergency unit which needs it, in every part of Britain.

For this and other improvements which the Secretaries of State for Health, and Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland will announce, I am providing for the NHS almost £0.5 billion of extra investment today.

Throughout the public services, more than £1 billion of additional new investment, on top of the £2 billion I have allocated to families and pensioners.

I have a final announcement. We promised to get inflation and interest rates under control, to sort out the public finances, to make this the government of economic competence and we have.

We promised to invest billions more in health and education and we have.

We promised we would cut youth unemployment and we have.

And I can confirm to the House that, while rebuilding our public services, our prudence in office also enables us to hold to our pledge made at the election not to raise the basic rate of income tax.

BASIC RATE CUT

In fact, to reward work and ensure working families are better off, I will match the new 10p starting rate of income tax this April with a cut from next April in the basic rate of income tax to 22p, the lowest basic rate of tax for 70 years — and under this Government.

Today's Budget is a better deal for work, a better deal for the family, a better deal for business — for a Britain now united around values of fairness and enterprise, and I commend this Budget not just to the House but to the country.



MARRIED COUPLE, BOTH WORKING, ONE CHILD

	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife
Gross annual income	12000	8000	12000	8000	15000	10000	15000	10000	20000	15000	20000	15000	30000	15000	30000	15000
Tax/NI/Benefit	2127	256	2195	551	3117	916	3185	1196	4767	2566	4835	2846	7589	2566	7657	2846
NET INCOME	9873	7744	9805	7449	11883	9084	11815	8804	15233	12434	15165	12154	22411	12434	22343	12154
JOINT NET INCOME	17617		17254		20967		20619		27667		27319		34845		34497	
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(7.09%)	(239)			(4.48%)	(224)			(2.70%)	(224)			(2.01%)	(224)		
Gross annual income	40000	20000	40000	20000	60000	40000	60000	40000	80000	60000	80000	60000	100000	80000	100000	80000
Tax/NI/Benefit	11192	4216	11437	4496	19192	10641	19437	11098	27192	18641	27437	19098	35192	26641	35437	27098
JOINT NET INCOME	28808	15784	28563	15504	40808	29359	40563	28902	52808	41359	52563	40902	64808	53359	64563	52902
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	44592		44067		70167		69465		94167		93465		118167		117465	
	(2.42%)	(401)			(1.86%)	(578)			(1.23%)	(578)			(0.92%)	(578)		

MARRIED COUPLE, BOTH WORKING, TWO CHILDREN

	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife
Gross annual income	12000	8000	12000	8000	15000	10000	15000	10000	20000	15000	20000	15000	30000	15000	30000	15000
Tax/NI/Benefit	2127	-244	2195	31	3117	416	3185	676	4767	2066	4835	2326	7589	2066	7657	2326
NET INCOME	9873	8244	9805	7969	11883	9584	11815	9324	15233	12934	15165	12674	22411	12934	22343	12674
JOINT NET INCOME	18117		17774		21467		21139		28167		27839		35345		35017	
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(7.09%)	(239)			(4.48%)	(224)			(2.70%)	(224)			(2.01%)	(224)		
Gross annual income	40000	20000	40000	20000	60000	40000	60000	40000	80000	60000	80000	60000	100000	80000	100000	80000
Tax/NI/Benefit	11192	3716	11437	3976	19192	10141	19437	10578	27192	18141	27437	18578	35192	26141	35437	26578
NET INCOME	28808	16284	28563	16024	40808	29859	40563	29422	52808	41859	52563	41422	64808	53859	64563	53422
JOINT NET INCOME	45092		44587		70667		69985		94667		93985		118667		117985	
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(2.42%)	£(401)			(1.86%)	£(578)			(1.23%)	£(578)			(0.92%)	£(578)		

MARRIED, NON-WORKING SPOUSE, TWO CHILDREN

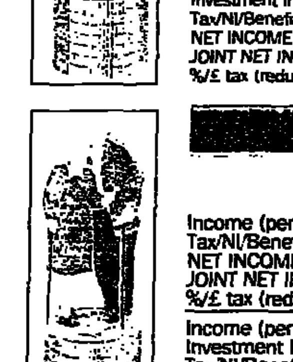
	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99
Gross annual income	10000	10000	20000	20000	25000	25000	30000	30000	35000	35000
Tax/NI/Benefit	117	271	3417	3571	5067	5221	6239	6393	7842	8173
NET INCOME	9883	9729	16583	16429	19933	19779	23761	23607	27158	26827
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(3.53%)	£(50)	(1.06%)	£(50)	(0.79%)	£(50)	(0.66%)	£(50)	(2.44%)	£(227)
Gross annual income	45000	45000	60000	60000	100000	100000	140000	140000	180000	180000
Tax/NI/Benefit	11842	12173	17842	18173	33842	34173	49842	50173	65842	66173
NET INCOME	33158	32827	42158	41827	66158	65827	90158	89827	114158	113827
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(1.70%)	£(227)	(1.18%)	£(227)	(0.64%)	£(227)	(0.44%)	£(227)	(0.34%)	£(227)

- These calculations are an indication of the tax liability and do not take account of any tax credits or deductions at source.
- National Insurance (NI) is not contracted out contributions.
- The figures are rounded to the nearest pound.
- Assume that mortgages attract Miras.

Prepared by KPMG Tax Advisers.

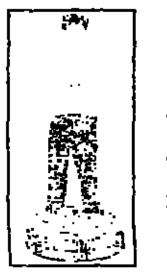
MARRIED COUPLE 65-74

	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife
Income (pensions)	8112	2012	7988	2012	13112	2012	12988	2012	18112	2012	17988	2012	23112	2012	22988	2012
Tax/NI/Benefit	0	0	20	0	992	0	1118	0	2293	0	2474	0	3789	0	3908	0
NET INCOME	8112	2012	7968	2012	12120	2012	11870	2012	15819	2012	15514	2012	19323	2012	19080	2012
JOINT NET INCOME	10124		9980		14132		13882		17831		17526		21335		21092	
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(100.00%)	£(20)			(11.27%)	£(126)			(7.32%)	£(181)			(3.05%)	£(119)		
Income (pensions)	18112	2012	17988	2012	23112	2012	22988	2012	28112	2012	27988	2012	43112	2012	42988	2012
Investment Income	6000	4000	6000	4000	6000	4000	6000	4000	6000	4000	6000	4000	9000	6000	9000	6000
Tax/NI/Benefit	4069	29	4138	120	5307	29	5288	120	6759	29	6896	120	13959	332	14096	520
NET INCOME	20043	5983	19850	5892	23805	5983	23700	5892	27353	5983	27092	5892	38153	7680	37892	7492
JOINT NET INCOME	26026		25742		29788		29592		33336		32984		45833		45384	
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(3.76%)	£(160)			(1.33%)	£(72)			(3.25%)	£(228)			(2.22%)	£(325)		



MARRIED COUPLE OVER 75

	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife	1999/00 Husband	Wife	1998/99 Husband	Wife
Income (pensions)	8112	2012	7988	2012	10112	2012	9988	2012	13112	2012	12988	2012	18112	2012	17988	2012
Tax/NI/Benefit	0	0	0	0	235	0	378	0	925	0	1068	0	2226	0	2424	0
NET INCOME	8112	2012	7988	2012	9877	2012	9610	2012	12187	2012	11920	2012	15886	2012	15564	2012
JOINT NET INCOME	10124		10000		11889		11622		14199		13932		17898		17576	
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	0.00%	£0			(37.83%)	£(143)			(13.39%)	£(143)			(8.17%)	£(198)		
Income (pensions)	13112	2012	12988	2012	18112	2012	17988	2012	23112	2012	22988	2012	23112	2012	22988	2012
Investment Income	6000	4000	6000	4000	6000	4000	6000	4000	6000	4000	6000	4000	9000	6000	9000	6000
Tax/NI/Benefit	2571	3	2769	82	4036	3	4138	82	5307	3	5288	82	5997	272	6096	482
NET INCOME	16541	6009	16219	5930	20076	6009	19850	5930	23805	6009	23700	5930	26115	7740	25892	7530
JOINT NET INCOME	22550		22149		26085		25780		29814		29630		33855		33422	
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(9.72%)	£(277)			(4.29%)	£(181)			(1.12%)	£(60)			(4.70%)	£(309)		



SINGLE PERSON NO CHILDREN

	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99
Gross annual income	10000	10000	15000	15000	20000	20000
Tax/NI/Benefit	1562	1700	3212	3350	4862	5000
NET INCOME	8438	8300	11788	11650	15138	15000
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(8.12%)	£(138)	(4.12%)	£(138)	(2.76%)	£(138)
Gross annual income	30000	30000	45000	45000	60000	60000
Tax/NI/Benefit	7684	7822	13287	13602	19287	19602
NET INCOME	22316	22178	31713	31398	40713	40398
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(1.76%)	£(138)	(2.32%)	£(315)	(1.61%)	£(315)



SINGLE PERSON TWO CHILDREN

	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99
Gross annual income	12000	12000	15000	15000	20000	20000
Tax/NI/Benefit	616	807	1606	1797	3256	3447
NET INCOME	11384	11193	13394	13203	16744	16553
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(3.76%)	£(87)	(2.63%)	£(87)	(1.76%)	£(87)
Gross annual income	30000	30000	45000	45000	60000	60000
Tax/NI/Benefit	6078	6269	11681	12049	17681	18049
NET INCOME	23922	23731	33319	32951	42319	41951
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(1.12%)	£(87)	(1.95%)	£(264)	(1.35%)	£(264)



SINGLE PERSON 65-74

	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99
Gross annual income	10000	10000	15000	15000	20000	20000
Tax/NI/Benefit	789	927	1939	2077	3408	3506
NET INCOME	9211	9073	13061	12923	16592	16494
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(14.89%)	£(138)	(6.64%)	£(138)	(2.80%)	£(98)
Gross annual income	25000	25000	30000	30000	35000	35000
Investment Income	10000	10000	15000	15000	15000	15000
Tax/NI/Benefit	7311	7586	11311	11586	13311	13586
NET INCOME	27689	27414	33689	33414	36689	36414
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(3.63%)	£(275)	(2.37%)	£(275)	(2.02%)	£(275)

SINGLE PERSON OVER 75

	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99	1999/00	1998/99
Gross annual income	10000	10000	15000	15000	20000	20000
Tax/NI/Benefit	730	883	1880	2033	3398	3506
NET INCOME	9270	9117	13120	12967	16602	16494
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(17.33%)	£(153)	(7.53%)	(153)	(3.08%)	£(108)
Gross annual income	25000	25000	30000	30000	35000	35000
Investment Income	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000
Tax/NI/Benefit	9311	9586	11311	11586	13311	13586
NET INCOME	30689	30414	33689	33414	36689	36414
%/£ tax (reduction)/increase	(2.87%)	£(275)	(2.37%)	£(275)	(2.02%)	£(275)

Ten pence band will halve tax bill for 2 million

INCOME TAX

By Caroline Merrell

THE Government finally unveiled the much-heralded ten pence tax band, a central plank of its election manifesto.

Gordon Brown said that the introduction of the band would mean that two million people would see their income tax bill fall by half. He said that the time was right to bring in the rate.

Those who earn about £5,835 will benefit the most proportionally from the new rate, saving £150 a year in income tax.

The new low rate will replace the old 20 pence band, which was introduced seven years under the previous Government.

All taxpayers will benefit from the change.

The Chancellor also unexpectedly announced the intention to cut the basic rate of income tax from 23 pence to 22 pence, the lowest rate of income tax for 70 years. This will be the fourth cut in basic rate tax in the past five years, and the second under a Labour Government.

The Chancellor also implied that married pensioners, most of whom are unlikely to get the children's tax credit, would continue to benefit from the married couples' allowance. In fact, this concession only applies to couples where one spouse is aged 65 before April 5, 2000.

High earners will also be hit by the plans to swap the married couples' allowance, with the children's tax credit. Higher rate tax payers, those earning above £32,335, will start to lose the benefit — the credit is entirely extinguished where the claimant earns about £38,500.

"Is there any reason, apart from the married couples' allowance being axed, why these two should not be wed?"

As is usual, the Chancellor increased the personal allowances and tax bands in line with inflation.

The personal allowance, the amount that anyone can earn before they pay tax, will rise to £4,335 next year, an increase of £140.

The ten pence starting rate of tax will be applied to the first £1,500 of income above the personal allowance, the 23 pence rate will be applied to the £26,499 figure, while all those earning over £32,335 will pay 40 per cent tax.

The personal allowance for old age pensioners will be increased by more than the rate of inflation. The personal allowance for those that are aged 65 to 74 will be increased to £5,720, while the personal allowance for those aged 75 or over is raised to £5,980.

John Battersby, an KPMG accountant, said that the impact of the changes was difficult to work out.

He said: "It is more complicated for people to assess. The new children's tax credit will come in from April 6, 2001. The allowance goes next year. However, employees will make £265 from the basic-rate reduction.

"A number of allowances are linked to the married couples' allowance, including the widow's bereavement allowance — this is being abolished."

John Whiting of PricewaterhouseCoopers said: "It is all a question of redistribution. The poor will pay less in tax and national insurance."

Premium rate up by less than feared

INSURANCE

By Marianne Curphey

FEARS that insurance premium tax (IPT) would be raised from its current rate of 4 per cent on household and motor policies to a hefty 17.5 per cent — the rate charged on travel insurance — proved unfounded.

Instead, the standard rate is to rise this July to 5 per cent, raising an additional £250 million for Customs & Excise and adding about £3 to the average motor insurance policy.

IPT, introduced in 1994, has come to be seen by government as a "soft tax"; it is often overlooked or misunderstood by policyholders, who think the company is making a charge.

The Association of British Insurers said it was "disappointed by the increase" because it came at a time when premiums for general insurance were rising. Mark Boleat, director-general of the association, said: "The increase in IPT will result in higher premiums and could further encourage some people not to insure. It will hit people on the lowest incomes hardest and those starting up new businesses."

Life insurance and most other long-term policies are exempt from IPT. Customs and Excise said the rate was still among the lowest in Europe.

Brown aims to make firms pay extra £4bn

By Gavin Lumsden

THE Chancellor announced action to close corporate tax loopholes, aimed at protecting an estimated £4 billion of future Government revenue.

Although he shied away from introducing general anti-avoidance rules designed to provide a blanket defence against revenue loss, he warned the business sector that they remained an option.

Top of the Government's hit list are employers, such as computer and offshore oil companies, who hire individuals through their own service companies so as to exploit the tax advantages of the corporate structure.

The Government wants to make it impossible for employees to leave their job on a Friday, only to return the following Monday to do exactly the same job as an indirectly engaged "consultant" for whom substantially less tax and national insurance is paid. Hundreds of thousands of people are employed on this basis and will be affected by new legislation which the Government plans for April 2000.

The Government has also tightened up on VAT in a number of areas, with banks and other financial service companies most affected. Until now they have been able to outsource support services so as to escape paying VAT. The Government is planning to restrict the areas on which banks can claim exemption from VAT, although it will consult with the industry first.

Ian Barlow, UK head of tax at KPMG, said: "Companies have outsourced for good commercial reasons and suddenly there is a VAT charge. It could be very significant."

Other measures are being taken by HM Customs and Excise to protect an estimated £1.5 billion of future VAT revenue. Foremost of these are a crackdown on avoidance in land and property leasebacks and in the construction industry.

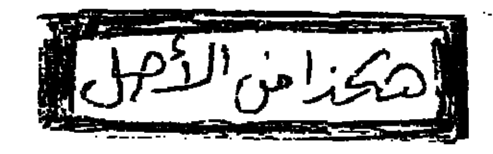
Meanwhile, the Inland Revenue has closed a loophole which allowed UK companies to to avoid tax in this country by diverting income to subsidiaries. Two other loopholes which enabled oil companies to sell and lease back assets so as to escape petroleum revenue tax and corporation tax will also be shut.

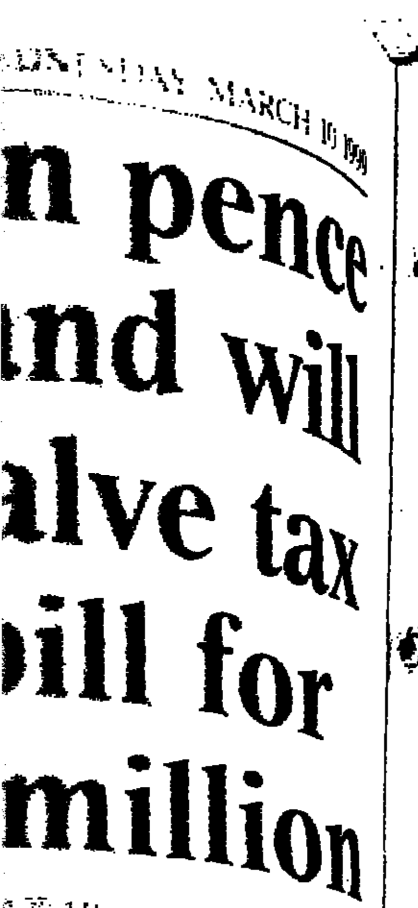


City welcome for Brown
●
Shares to rise
●
Interest rates to stick

BUSINESS Page 29













Fabius, left, and Dufoix, cleared in the HIV blood trial, and Hervé, guilty of manslaughter

Fury as court frees blood scandal trio

Adam Sage reports on a case that plunged French justice into turmoil

FRENCH justice was plunged into controversy yesterday as Edmond Hervé, a former Health Minister, was let off with a "symbolic" censure after being found guilty of manslaughter in the HIV-contaminated blood scandal.

Laurent Fabius, the former Prime Minister, and Georgina Dufoix, the former Social Affairs and Health Minister, who ranked above M Hervé, were acquitted of similar charges in the saga that left more than 4,000 haemophiliacs and hospital patients infected in France — far more than in any other European country — of whom about 1,000 have since died.

The ruling plunged French justice into turmoil, but represented a posthumous triumph for the architect of the proceedings — the late President Mitterrand — who set up the court in 1993 when he realised that his three former ministers could not hope to escape trial for their alleged failure to halt the spread of Aids.

Relatives of the victims were outraged as the Court of Justice of the Republic said M Hervé would walk free, even though he was found reponsible for the deaths of two people in the 1980s. Shouts of "murderer" rang out in the court.

Sylvie Rouy, 36, who was contaminated in 1985 from a blood transfusion after the birth of her son, said: "In this country, politicians are like gangsters. You can catch them but you can't punish them. This is a scandal."

In a verdict that was as bizarre as the three-week trial, the court said M Hervé had already suffered at the hands of French public opinion. There was no reason to punish him further, said Christian Le Gunehec, the presiding judge.

His comments confirmed the view of victims and their relatives that the court was rigged in favour of the defendants, as 12 of the jurors were MPs and only three were professional magistrates. The prosecution had itself called for an acquittal.

Critics said Mitterrand had done all to ensure the acquittal of his protégé, M Fabius, whom he appointed as France's youngest Prime Minister in 1984. Mitterrand's success was complete when the court astonished observers by going out of its way to praise M Fabius for his handling of the Aids epidemic. As there is little chance of fresh charges being brought against any of the defendants, M Fabius is now free to pursue his ambition to become head of state.

The 52-year-old former Prime Minister was accused, along with M Hervé, 56, and Mme Dufoix, 55, of criminal negligence in delaying the introduction of Aids screening tests for commercial reasons. The two Health Ministers were also accused of failing to halt blood donations among high-risk groups, including prisoners, and of failing to ensure the sterilisation of blood products known to be contaminated with HIV.

But the court exonerated all three defendants of blame for any failings of the public health system in connection with these aspects of the case.

M Le Gunehec said M Fabius had acted to speed up the introduction of HIV-screening tests. Eight of the jurors voted to condemn M Hervé for two issues that did not feature in the main charges. They said he had been negligent in failing to ensure the systematic testing of blood products from the day the programme was meant to start, August 1, 1985. He had also failed to ensure victims were told they had been contaminated, leaving their families exposed to unnecessary risks. Two people were contaminated as a result.

M Hervé has five days to decide whether to appeal. He said after the verdict: "The court has not had the courage to acquit me and it has not had the courage to convict me properly. The verdict is unjust."

He is likely to continue in his post as Mayor of Rennes in Britanny. M Fabius will retain his job as president of the National Assembly. Mme Dufoix has retired from politics and become a fervent Protestant and owner of a small vineyard in southern France.

But the 15-year saga is not over. Several health officials and advisers to the ministers may now be charged.

Medical staff help Sylvie Rouy, infected with HIV by a transfusion while giving birth, as she leaves court



Joelle Bouchet had hoped that the trial would reveal why her haemophiliac son, Ludovic, was treated with HIV-contaminated blood products in 1985

Mother vows to fight on for Aids son

By Adam Sage

THE saddest of smiles lined Joelle Bouchet's face. "This hearing," she said in her soft, calm voice, "it's been awful. All lies and manipulation."

A few weeks ago she had high hopes she would find answers to her grief during the trial. This was to be the moment when she finally discovered how, in 1985, she came to inject HIV-infected blood in her son and only child. She thought she would find out why nobody had bothered to test or sterilise the blood product that contaminated Ludovic, then a nine-year-old haemophiliac. She believed the process would relieve her of the immense guilt that it was she who had injected her son, now 23, whose survival depends on 6,500 pills a year.

"We have suffered so much that I wanted to face this trial with sincerity and openness," she said. "But French justice just wants to smother the truth. The judges do not even know what is in the dossier."

She is not alone in criticising the Court of Justice of the Republic, set up to rule on the ministers accused of wrongdoing in office. The gaffes of the presiding judge, Christian Le Gunehec, have drawn gasps of astonishment from veteran court reporters. Lawyers have denounced the prosecution for undermining its own case, describing it as "built on sand". Matthieu Aron, a top legal commentator, said: "This is a trial like no other."

"I have just seen emptiness and indifference inside the court," Mme Bouchet said. "But I am used to it. It's been going on for so many years."

The indifference started in 1983 when Edmond Hervé, then Health Minister, told blood-banks to stop collecting blood from prisoners. "But they carried on," said Mme Bouchet. "And I just carried on using the products.

"Every fortnight or so, Ludovic would cut himself and I would inject the Factor 8 product he needed for his blood to coagulate." At the time, the Factor 8 product was made from blood pooled from a large number of donors. Inevitably, one or probably all of the bottles she had in her fridge contained blood taken from an HIV-infected, drug-taking inmate.

In October 1985, after one of Ludovic's regular blood tests, Mme Bouchet was told that he was "HIV positive". "I telephoned my doctor. He said it was like hepatitis and that there was nothing to worry about, so I didn't." Two years later, Ludovic fell ill. The doctor told her the truth: her son had Aids. "I felt responsible," she said. "Why had I not found out earlier? Why had I injected that product?"

If M Hervé and Georgina Dufoix, Social Affairs and Health Minister, had ordered the sterilisation of blood products early in 1985 — as Mme Bouchet believes they should have done — Ludovic would not be suffering from Aids. Instead, they waited until the autumn. Ludovic could also have been saved if Laurent Fabius, then Prime Minister, had authorised a US-made blood-screening test which was ready in the spring of 1985. But the Prime Minister delayed a decision until the summer, finally giving his approval to a French-made test.

> ‘It's been awful . . . all lies and manipulation of the truth by our officials’

The ministers claim they acted quickly, but Mme Bouchet argues: "They wanted the French firm to clean up the market, which was worth Fr400 million (£40 million) a year. What are we, compared with Fr400 million a year?"

Over the past decade, Mme Bouchet's son has been forced to abandon his studies "as they didn't want Aids victims in schools at the time". She has seen him plunge towards death, but has "stabilised" now. Her marriage has ended "under the strain", but this articulate woman refuses to give up her fight for justice.

Bonn tackled on Hitler slaves' cash

From Roger Boyes in Bonn

THE reputation of Germany's top companies yesterday hung in the balance as a group of New York lawyers negotiated with the Bonn Government over how to compensate wartime slave labourers who survived the Holocaust.

At issue is an industrial fund, designed by Bodo Hombach, closest adviser of Gerhard Schröder, the Chancellor, that is supposed to channel money from companies like Volkswagen, BMW and Siemens to people forced to work in brutal conditions during the Third Reich. The point is not only to make amends morally, but to head off class action suits in America. These cases are proving to be a public relations disaster for Germany and could be costly.

Herr Hombach, who met the lawyers in the Bonn chancellery yesterday, is anxious that these cases be dropped. No German company will be ready to pay into a fund if it feels it has to pay out a second time in the courts. The lawyers in Bonn yesterday — Michael Hausfeld, Mel Weiss and Martin Mendelson — were not convinced, however, that the fund will work or that it will give enough to individuals. One of their demands of Herr Hombach was: how much will each individual receive? At the moment the scope of the fund is rather modest: $2 billion (£1.2 billion). Since some half a million out of 10 million slave labourers are still alive, the per capita compensation will be limited.

Nato will offer 'Marshall Plan' to help Balkans

By Michael Evans, defence editor

AS AN inducement to signing a peace settlement, the warring parties in Kosovo were yesterday offered a new partnership with Nato to help them become more democratic and more in tune with modern European ideals.

With pressure building on the ethnic Albanians and the Yugoslav Government to agree on a peace deal in Paris next week, Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, used a conference in London to put forward the idea that the alliance could contribute towards a comprehensive aid programme for the Balkans.

Señor Solana said it was time to stop the piecemeal approach towards the Balkans, dealing with conflicts when they arose, first in Bosnia-Herzegovina and now with Kosovo. He said that, if a peace settlement was agreed, he hoped it would be the start of a "wider initiative to pull all parts of the Balkans towards Europe, politically as well as economically".

Nato sources said that, although the European Union and financial institutions would be the main players in helping the region to develop and become more democratic, the alliance could provide a security framework to ensure stability throughout the former Yugoslavia. One Nato official described it as a "Marshall Plan for the Balkans".

Under the proposal, Nato would provide military training, joint exercises and instruction in how to run armed forces democratically. The idea that Nato troops could instruct the Yugoslav Army in Western military procedures might seem optimistic, but Señor Solana was clearly intending his remarks for an era when President Milosevic no longer holds sway as an authoritarian leader.

Speaking at the Royal United Services Institute in Whitehall during a conference to mark next month's 50th anniversary of Nato, Señor Solana emphasised that the alliance was ready to launch airstrikes on Serbia, if Belgrade refused to sign a peace deal. However, appealing over the head of the Yugoslav President, Señor Solana said his proposal for a "partnership for prosperity" in the Balkans was intended to encourage young people in the region to "build for the future rather than refighting the battles of the past".

Serb police last night issued arrest warrants for eight members of the Kosovo Liberation Army, including three negotiators at the French talks.

FIGHTING erupted again in southern Kosovo yesterday as the Yugoslav Army laid siege to several villages, ethnic Albanian sources said. OSCE observers also reported artillery fire in the north near Vucitrn, as the UN refugee agency in Geneva said more than 1,600 villagers had fled fighting in the area. *(AFP)*



Many male members of the most senior Lemba clan carry the highly distinctive genetic signature of the Jewish priesthood — rarely found outside this Jewish elite

Is this a lost tribe of Israel?

Genetic detective work among a black African tribe has proved that it has biological links to the Jews. Anjana Ahuja reports

It didn't take long for Dr Tudor Parfitt to notice the black men loitering shyly at the back of the lecture hall. They stood out from their white university colleagues not only because of their colour — this was Johannesburg in the mid-Eighties — but also because they wore what appeared to be Jewish skull caps.

They had come to hear Parfitt, senior academic at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies, speak about the Falashas, known as the black Jews of Ethiopia. Parfitt, an Oxford-educated linguist and historian whose fame had spread with his study of the Falashas, learnt that the men at his lecture believed that they, too, belonged to a lost tribe of Israel. The men, from a tribe called the Lemba, invited Parfitt to visit their villages, hear their stories and learn their history.

Now, after more than a decade of study and an odyssey across Africa, Parfitt is ready to believe their claims. Using techniques in genetic anthropology perfected by colleagues at University College London, Parfitt recently discovered that this 70,000-strong black African tribe, scattered across southern Africa, shows a startling genetic overlap with inhabitants of southern Arabia, which harboured a thriving Jewish population in ancient times. Many male members of the most senior Lemba clan carry the highly distinctive genetic signature of the Jewish priesthood. This biological label, dating from biblical times and rarely found outside this Jewish elite, is certain to spark a controversial debate about Jewish and African history.

Parfitt, who retraced his steps across Africa for a documentary, is astonished at how his quest has turned out. "When I visited their villages, there seemed to be a mass of things that seemed to be authentic rather than learnt Semitic behaviour," he says. "They didn't seem to have picked up their customs from colonialists or missionaries."

The echoes of Judaism were abundant. The Lemba refused to eat "the pig" and ate only kosher meat. There were festivals and rituals to mark everything, from the new moon to menstruation. Boys were circumcised: inter-marriage was forbidden. The names of their 12 tribes seemed to derive from Hebrew. One is called the Selemane, which could be a corrupted form of Solomon. Another, the tribe of medicine men, is known as the *Sadiki*, close to the Hebrew term *tsaddik*, which means righteous man. Parfitt was intrigued, but wary. He decided that the way to clarify the issue was to use genetics. Armed with mouth swabs, test tubes and boxfuls of lollipops to soften villagers, Parfitt got permission from tribal elders to take saliva samples. The Lemba were keen to co-operate with those who might aid their claims to be children of Abraham.

The samples were sent for analysis to Dr Neil Bradman and Dr Mark Thomas at the Centre for Genetic Anthropology at University College London. The results were encouraging. Parfitt says: "We were looking at the Y chromosome, which is passed from father to son. We found that the Lemba gene pool had both Semitic and Bantu (black African) contributions. South African geneticists, who had also been investigating, had proved this, too. By Semitic, we mean characteristic of people in the Middle East and obviously this Semitic group includes Jews."

Bradman and Thomas had another surprise for Parfitt. Samples taken from the most senior clan, the Buba, showed the Cohen Modal Haplotype, a distinctive genetic pattern on the Y chromosome. This biological signature is found predominantly among members of the Jewish priesthood, the Cohanim. One could only become a Jewish priest if one's father was a priest — this pattern of paternal inheritance has preserved the Cohen Modal Haplotype as a potential watermark for Judaism. "This was arguable proof that there was a Jewish element in the history of the Lemba," Parfitt sums up.

Are the Lemba a lost tribe of Israel? "If you mean that they are one of the 12 tribes taken into captivity, then I don't think you can say that. But that phrase has taken on a more soft-focus meaning. If a lost tribe of Israel is a group that has been lost and has some unsuspected connection to other Jews, then it is a legitimate claim."

Because of the numbers of Lemba showing Semitic characteristics, the Jewish connection stretches back at least a century. "It is extremely unlikely that there could have been sexual contact between the Lemba and an unknown Jew," Parfitt says. "Moreover, it's practically inconceivable that it could have happened without being recorded. The influence is more likely to have come from southern Arabia where there were Jews. It's possible that a band of Jews left to go to black Africa many centuries ago and then interbred."

This is supported by genetic studies of people in the mountainous Hadramawt region of Yemen. Parfitt conducted studies here because many aspects of Lemba heritage seemed to fit with the area. Various mountain regions bear names that are similar to clan names; one of the towns is called Sena, which could be the mythical town of Senna from which the Lemba are said to have originated.

"That area in Yemen is not rich enough to support a big population, and it had a tradition of sending its sons to the four corners of the earth," Parfitt says. That would be consistent with a small-scale exodus to Africa and with tales passed through Lemba families of a homeland in the Middle East.

Parfitt, who is now preparing his research for publication, admits that these newfound members of the Jewish faith will provoke controversy. He is keen to point out that his interest is anthropological, rather than political, but he can see the implications.

"I don't think the Israelis will be pleased because it could mean another African group clamouring for citizenship," says Parfitt, who has been made an honorary Lemba. "Scholars in Zimbabwe won't be pleased because the thrust of their work has been to denigrate the Lemba. To prove that the Lemba did have origins outside Africa will leave egg on a lot of faces.

"There is no great movement among the Lemba to return to Israel. They are not persecuted for their religion. But what would happen if they did want to go? What would it mean for groups who claim to be of Jewish descent? Would we get people waving their DNA at the Israelis, asking to be let in? It is bound to provoke thought about what makes someone Jewish."

● Search for the Sons of Abraham, *Channel 4, 8pm, Monday, March 15*. Journey to the Vanished City, *Tudor Parfitt, Phoenix, £7.99*

Removing the whiff in the Paris Métro

SCIENCE BRIEFING

Nigel Hawkes

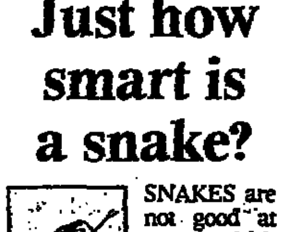
TRAVELLERS visiting some of the newer stations on the Paris Métro may detect an unusual smell in the air. Is it a ripe Camembert — or a newly baked baguette? Alas, no. It is the bad egg smell of hydrogen sulphide, which emerges from the sulphur-containing soils of Paris and leaks into the stations. The human nose is exquisitely sensitive to hydrogen sulphide. A few parts per billion are enough to wrinkle noses, fortunately, since it is a toxic gas.

Researchers at the Ecole Centrale in Lyons, working with the Ahlstrom Paper Group, have turned to an ingenious bit of chemistry to try to clear the air. Dr Pierre Pichat and colleagues plan to try a novel water purification system which uses cheap and simple components — titanium dioxide, glass fibre and ultraviolet lamps. *Chemistry in Britain*, which reports the plan, says it may mean sweeter Métro air.

Titanium dioxide is the pigment in white paint, so it is made in vast quantities. When divided in the form of an ultra-fine powder and exposed to ultraviolet light, it behaves like a semiconductor. Electrons in the titanium dioxide molecules are promoted to a higher energy band. They leave behind vacancies where electrons ought to be, and since electrons are negatively charged, these "holes" can be treated as if they carry a positive charge. If the activated powder then comes into contact with water or oxygen, the electrons and the holes create highly active free radicals which, in turn, react with any other molecules, rendering them odour-free, or so the team hopes. The plan is to attach the titanium dioxide particles to a glass fibre support, probably mounted under the platforms. Air will be drawn past the powder and the free radicals it will generate will react with the hydrogen sulphide and other volatile organic sulphide compounds produced in the soil. Ultraviolet lamps will regenerate the powders.

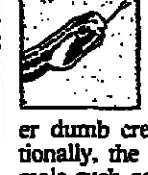
Dr Pichat is unsure how well it will work because of the volume of air in the Métro. Additional measures are to be tried, including activated charcoal, which soaks up odours and deodorises.

Other applications for the titanium dioxide are on the horizon. Greater attention is being paid to chlorinated solvents used in dry-cleaning and in the cleaning of offices and shops, with European regulations in the offing. There is also the problem of volatile organics, such as benzene and toluene from petrol stations, a big source of urban pollution.



Just how smart is a snake?



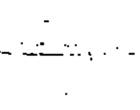


SNAKES are not good at mazes, which has given them a reputation as rather dumb creatures. Traditionally, the ability of animals such as rats to learn new tasks is measured by putting them in mazes and seeing how quickly they learn to escape.

Professor David Holtzmann, of the University of Rochester in New York, has devised a new test without a maze. He and his colleagues put 4ft corn snakes into a black, bathtub-like contraption that had eight holes and various markings from which the snakes could learn to navigate. When first tested, a snake typically takes more than ten minutes to find a hole. But after four days of practice, it is down to about six minutes: some snakes can do it in just 30 seconds.

The research team reports in the journal *Animal Behaviour* that pieces of aluminium foil were attached to snakes' heads to help in tracking them; they were filmed with a video camera.

"It isn't natural for a snake to be in a maze," Professor Holtzmann says. "But they are good at escaping from and diving into holes." He plans to use the test to measure how the brains of snakes develop.



Your dog is off the leash? That's a crime

Joanna Coles

NEW YORK LIFE

Friday: Forbidden by our paediatrician from going on any "destination walks" until our new baby is six weeks old, and his immune system is fully up and running, we venture out into the icy arms of the Manhattan winter, with *Thomas muffled* up and loaded into a papoose, like a pupa, attached to Peter's chest.

We decide to stroll up Riverside Park, a long, thin landscaped boulevard squeezed between the Upper West Side and the Hudson River. As we approach the park we spot a commotion under a *giant* lime tree. Several park rangers are trying to coax a boisterous black mongrel from behind a bush.

"Have you got any food on you? A cookie maybe? A sandwich, some candy?" one of the rangers calls to us as the mutt, ignoring his walker's calls, remains tantalisingly out of reach, under the impression that this is some sort of game.

"Here boy," the rangers chorus as we edge nearer and join a growing group of spectators shouting suggestions.

"What's going on, is it rabid?" I ask *fearfully*, because the night before we had watched an alarming TV news report about a fox that had attacked a woman upstate.

She was putting her garbage out when the fox leapt out of a bush, apparently unprovoked, bit her trouser leg and hung on tenaciously as she ran screaming down the garden path. The entire state is now on the alert for a rabid fox.

"No, it's not rabies," says Officer Periera, who is directing the futile capture attempt. "It's zero tolerance on dog crimes. From now on anyone walking their dog without a leash gets a $100 ticket, $200 for a repeat offence."

He beckons to a sullen Hispanic youth who has his hands deep in the pockets of his Puffa jacket. "This your dog?"

"No, man. I'm just the walker."

"Who does it belong to?"

"A woman who lives nearby, but she tells me I gotta let it off its leash."

"Well, you tell her from me that it's just cost her $100," says Periera, as he writes out a ticket.

"How many of those have you written?" I ask. "Well, put it this way: in the whole of last year we wrote 1,000 summonses for dog offences. Since last Friday we've written 236."

An elderly woman protectively cradling her Maltese poodle from the still uncaptured mongrel gives a low whistle. "That's a lot of summons activity!" she says admiringly.

"We caught one dogwalker with 20 dogs all off the leash in Central Park last week," adds Periera. "We coulda given him 20 tickets. But we cut him a break. We only booked him for eight." "That's still 800 bucks," chuckles the old woman.

"Coudda been a coupla grand," says the officer. "We were nice."

*As we leave I notice a suspi*cious-looking man in a beige trenchcoat, holding a felt fedora and leaning against an unmarked black Ford Bronco, who has been silently observing the action. On closer inspection we spot a silver badge hanging from his neck, which identifies him as Jack T. Linn, the deputy parks commissioner.

"Why the sudden offensive against dogs?" I inquire.

"This," he says, waving his arm at the ongoing capture attempt, "is Mayor Giuliani's latest crackdown in action."

Peter looks sceptical. "Dogs are the vandals of the Nineties," Jack T Linn continues, clearly on a riff now.

"Dogs?" Peter asks dubiously.

"Sure. They're the graffiti artists of this decade," Linn continues. "If you had come to the city in the Seventies, it was covered in graffiti. That wall, for example, was covered, and now look . . ." He gestures to the perimeter wall, clean save for a wind-trembled quilt of moss. "That's zero tolerance in action. It's the cigarette-butt theory. No one wants to be the first one to *drop one, but if there are sev*eral already on the ground, no one cares."

"I just want to say what a good job you people are doing," says a short man, approaching with two small dogs that look like inflated corgies with long tails in tow. "This is Yumi," he says, introducing the smaller dog. "And this is Chikara. I'm Russell."

"Why, thank you, Russell," says Jack T. Linn, applying Chapstick to his bottom lip as he studies Russell's dogs. "What breed are these?"

"Shiba-Inu," says Russell. "They're Japanese and aggres*sive. They're bred as temple* guard dogs."

"They don't look big enough to be guard dogs," observes Linn.

"They know no fear," says Russell. "A year ago in this very same park a dalmatian came over and started bothering Yumi, so she took a chunk out of his ear. Suddenly I was surrounded. Everyone was shouting 'You're gonna pay for this'. I felt like a Nazi!"

"Ya work for the City?" yells a middle-aged jogger wheezing past.

Linn nodds.

"Well, *every parent* who has children is ecstatic about this crackdown," the jogger says, panting. "I'm your archetypal Jewish liberal doctor living on Riverside Drive and I think this is great. We've all had our children traumatised by dogs off their leashes."

He begins to jog away, then turns and shouts over his shoulder. "If you want to see my kid, she's on the cover of next month's issue of *Parents* magazine."

"So why now?" I ask Linn as we sit in his Bronco cruising slowly along the park to *spare Thomas the cold.*

"We've reached the tipping point. Dog owners are the new smokers. And in the same way that smoking bans on the subways are enforced by peer pressure, we think this will be, too. We're already organising civilian patrols, armed with mobile phones, who can alert us when they spot a violation of the leash laws."

Sunday: At supper with our friend Ron, a former gambling addict-turned-financial counsellor and besotted own*er of Willow, a frisky Ameri*can standard poodle, we mention our encounter with the Parks Patrol. Ron explodes with indignation. "It's antidogism," he complains. "We used to talk about toys and veterinarians, but now the talk on the street is about civil disobedience.

"Dog owners are organising," he warns us ominously. "Oh God, yes. Have you heard about Floral — Friends and Lovers of Riverside Animal Life? It's launching a campaign of civil disobedience: going for walks without ID, and if we're caught with our *dogs off the leash, we give our* name as Eva Braun."

● *Thank you to the scores of readers who sent cards, letters and e-mails on the occasion of Thomas's birth. To those who were alarmed by Peter's graphic description of my labour, let me assure you that it was, in fact, far worse.*

Miracle or myth? The cellulite cures

A new remedy for dimpled thighs leaves doctors sceptical, say **Helen Rumbelow** and **Roger Maynard**

BURRI RENE/MAGNUM



"From a scientific point of view cellulite doesn't exist — it's just fat. Some herbs and a bit of iodine are not going to have any effect" says a dermatologist

Until the Sixties British women *had* never heard of cellulite. Not that it didn't exist, of course, but it was not until *miniskirts* were *de rigueur that the term* crossed *the* Atlantic *to hit* the consciousness of *Vogue* readers.

Thirty years later cellulite has become an industry in itself, and yesterday the exuberant London launch of the latest cellulite-banishing product was heavy with the kind of hype that only the beauty industry can inspire.

"World peace is a great thing to hope for and much more imporant than thin thighs," said a spokeswoman for Cellasene. At least, she continued enthusiastically, women can achieve one of these with the new product.

Her unspoken message was all too clear: forget world peace, what women really want is smooth thighs. If this seems like one of the more ridiculous statements made about cellulite (and there have been many) consider this: when the herbal pills were *launched in Australia last year scuffles* were reported in chemists. Fifty-thousand packets were sold within the hour, and one packet was auctioned for more than £500.

Yesterday at a Hyde Park hotel the audience was only marginally less excitable. They may have been well-groomed, but one could only assume that beneath the languid lines of their tailoring lurked dimples. Their enthusiasm for the free samples of Cellasene was undimmed throughout the two-hour presentation.

The new remedy is the brainchild of Gianfranco Merizzi, a a slim, dark scientist whose ancestors were apothecaries in the Italian Alps. Yet as every doctor will tell you, the medical establishment dismisses Cellasene and other such "cures" as modern-day snake oil, and men such as Dr Merizzi as deluded.

Cellulite is not a medically recognised term. The scientific world uses the more prosaic "fat", while marketing men call it "sellulite" (about 80 per cent of women have dimpled fat on their bodies, a statistic that has helped to prop up a cellulite-prevention industry that is worth £12 million a year in Britain alone).

Just listen to Dr Merizzi, whose remedy costs £70 for a three-month course: "There is a lot of confusion today as a lot of doctors do not understand what cellulite is; they say it is just fat." *Instead, female hor*mones make the blood vessels more porous, he explains, leading to congestion in the tissue around the thighs, hips and bottom. This blockage starves the area of oxygen and the connective tissue degenerates, causing the dimpling effect.

*Merizzi's product uses herb*al ingredients such as ginkgo biloba, yellow sweet clover and iodine-rich kelp or bladderwrack seaweed, which, he says, increases the metabolic rate and stimulates circulation.

> When the pills were sold in Australia scuffles broke out

Since its launch in Italy five years ago, 50 women have participated in trials. A study released yesterday, using 40 women (too few to impress doctors) showed an average reduction of 2.47 per cent in hip measurements in eight weeks.

Tests on other anti-cellulite products carried out last year by *Health Which?* suggested that they were more likely to shrink bank balances than thighs. Ten leading creams *had no effect on subcutaneous* fat. The Consumers' Association magazine asked the manufacturers for clinical proof that the products worked, but said some of the theories put forward "bore no resemblance to any proven facts".

Yet listening to Dr Merizzi, all this forgotten. While British doctors advise people to lose weight and to exercise, he says that neither is important *to shift dimpled blubber.*

Anthony Chu, a consultant dermatologist at the Hammersmith Hospital in London, says: "From a scientific point of view cellulite doesn't exist — it's just fat. From a scientific point of view some herbs and a bit of iodine are not going to have any effect on fat.

"And from a common-sense point of view, if it has been on the market in Italy for five years *and it really* works, why haven't women been throwing their knickers in the air and de*manding that it be sold every*where immediately?"

Although Cellasene's manufacturers claim to be introducing "just a 50 per cent" markup on ingredients that they argue are much more potent than those sold by Chinese herbalists, others believe they are making much more profit. Trudy Mills, the information officer for the National Institue of Medical Herbalists, claims that the ingredients for one packet were likely to cost only £1.

But then some money must be left over for marketing, *such as the 10,000 "Don't Pan*ic, There's Still Some Cellasene Left" badges made for pharmacists in America.

After the initial hysteria has died down, Cellasene's claims can seem hard to swallow. Many Australian women are not so sure about its "miracle" qualities. One of them interviewed on Australian TV this week did not notice any change to her cellulite in the first month, but by the second she noticed some results.

"It's normally family and friends who ask. I have to show them and ask 'What do you think?'", she told Channel 9's *A Current Affair*. "Some people say it looks a little different and others say it hasn't done a thing," she added.

Another woman, Cheryl, said that she had not noticed any difference.

Jo also took Cellasene. Although she lost 3kg, the cellulite is still there. "I wouldn't take them — I think they are misleading," she said.

It seems that women may be disappointed yet again. Perhaps we should spend less time worrying about dimpled thighs and more about world peace after all.

CELLULITE: THE FACTS

CELLULITE IS the popular term for fat that is deposited beneath the skin on the buttocks, upper legs and arms, giving an orange-peel effect.

IS IT A MYTH: Cellulite is not a medical term. Doctors say that there is no difference between the composition of "smooth" fat on the body and the grainy kind known as cellulite. Their only advice is that sufferers should watch their weight and eat healthily.

REMEDIES: The most drastic action is to re*mould the body with liposuction, but this is* not specifically a treatment for cellulite. Plastic surgeons say that a slight reduction in cellulite may occur but it is not guaranteed.

There are less radical beauty techniques available — but at a price. Deep muscle massage and motorised rollers designed to improve circulation and to break down fatty de*posits cost at least £50 a session.* It is claimed that benefits will be visible only after a minimum of 15 treatments.

Most cellulite sufferers limit themselves to expensive creams and potions that claim to smoothe away orange-peel fat. Seaweed ingredients are popular. The equivalent of a luxurious two-hour algae wrap at health centres (around £50 a time) can be bought as a cream at the chemist. *Prices vary but more* reputable companies charge from £20 to £30. However, doctors say that creams definitely do not break down fat.

A Budget for the ballot box

Prudence has served Gordon well for the battle to come

The only announcement missing from Gordon Brown's speech was the date of the next general election. Yesterday's unexpectedly wide-ranging and, at first sight, generous package sounded like a pre-election Budget. Of course, the details reveal many questions and uncertainties. And several measures are being phased in over the next two years, the run-up to the election. That political target was clearly as much in Mr Brown's mind as any financial ones.

The Budget offered a combination of fiscal and monetary caution (prudence in Mr Brown's lexicon), together with redistribution. Money has been transferred from better-off couples without children to the working poor, average earners with children, and pensioners.

This package was coupled with eye-catching increases in public investment, in practice allocating money first announced last July. It all *seemed too good to be true.* Most of the pain was glided over: for instance, the disappearance of the 20p rate of income tax came in the slipstream of the announcements of the new 10p starting rate and cut in the basic rate next year.

At the same time, Mr Brown was keen to reassure financial markets that he was not taking risks. Despite his apparent largesse, public borrowing over the next three years is projected to be lower than previously forecast. Consequently, the "golden rule" on the balance between current *spending and* revenue and overall public debt targets should be met. So where is the money coming from for what Mr Brown described as a "boost to purchasing power over the next three years by £6 billion"?

Peter Riddell

Mr Brown's answer is twofold — the rewards of fiscal restraint since the election and *lower forecasts of social security* spending. Fiscal policy has been tightened substantially and a sharp fall in long-term interest rates should produce £4 billion on savings on debt interest payments over the next three years.

More significant is a cut of £9 billion in projections by the Department of Social Security of spending on unemployment and income support. This *reflects new estimates of the* state of the labour market and the impact of welfare reforms (including the tightening up of entitlements inaugurated by Peter Lilley). This reduction comes despite a revision upwards of unemployment forecasts because of the slowdown *in economic activity.*Overall, spending is expected to be £18 billion less than previously assumed over the next three years. So even though forecasts of tax receipts have been cut by £8 billion over the period, this leaves £10 billion, of which £4 billion has gone to *reduce the deficit.* And, *hey* presto, Mr Brown brought numerous rabbits out of the hat.

The Tories were busily pointing out last night that several taxes are being increased. Despite a fall in the coming year, the overall tax burden is still due to be higher than when Labour came to power. Mr Brown announced many of the changes, such as the cut in the basic rate, well in advance so as to be able to present a favourable impression of the overall impact on take-home pay in two to three years' time. This is just, of course, when the general election will be held.

The Tories have made much of so-called stealth taxes on the middle classes which people do not immediately recognise. Mr Brown has proved to be ingenious in finding the least politically damaging ways of raising *taxes* and, as yesterday, of attracting attention to tax cuts and disguising tax increases. The biggest tax increase *since* 1997 has been the ending of tax credit for pension funds, worth more than £5 billion. But that only affects the future income of pensioners after *retirement,* not their current take-home pay. But the main reason why Labour has not suffered in the polls from tax increases and the Tories have not benefited, is the sharp fall in mortgage interest rates since last autumn. That has boosted disposable incomes and Mr Brown's intention yesterday is to prevent a squeeze developing over the next three years.

On the Treasury's own calculations, three quarters of households should be better off after yesterday's measures.

Mr Brown said his Budget was intended to reward the new Labour trinity of enterprise, families and work. The sections on encouraging new entrepreneurs and *risk-taking* ventures could easily have come from the Howe-Lawson era of the 1980s. The question, as Andrew Dilnot of the Institute for Fiscal Studies has asked, is whether the only entrepreneurship such tax incentives encourage is among accountants devising new schemes to minimise *tax liabilities. But despite the* "family" lobby, there are questions about whether tax changes are really that significant in encouraging marriages and stable family life. Similarly, there is a lively debate about whether a lower starting rate or higher thresholds is the right way to increase work incentives.

The long-term judgment on the Budget will depend less on *ingenious calculations about* the impact of these various tax changes than on the course of the economy. Mr Brown has not revised his economic forecasts since last November. The series of cuts in interest rates by the Bank of England with more to come, — Mr Brown *obviously hopes* — has underpinned Treasury projections of "a soft landing" this year and smart pick-up in growth next year. Mr Brown has a cushion of safety in his borrowing estimates if activity is lower.

However, his tax cuts could look risky, rather than prudent, if global, and in particular American, economic prospects deteriorate sharply, as some economists fear. But if Mr Brown is any way near right, Labour is on course for comfortable re-election.

peter.riddell@the-times.co.uk



A debate too late

The real economic fight takes place between Premier and Chancellor

Let me tell you a secret. There were actually three Budgets this year but they let you see *only one. The first two were* hidden from view, private and confidential, and have been lost in the heat of battle. Gordon Brown's variations on a rococo theme in the House of Commons yesterday was the third.

A Budget is a rare event in the political calendar. It is something real. It is the moment when the true opposition to the government of the day, the Treasury, attempts to shout the facts of life. Back in the days of *Denis Healey, this included the* messy bits. For once those pushy, camera-hungry, get-votes-quick ministers are shoved into the gutter and realpolitik is cock of the walk. Tony Blair and his image-spinners must retreat into the shadows. Budget Day is when Whitehall's undead awake. It is the Festival of the Greys. Yesterday they were positively radiant.

The British constitution pretends that government is a seamless web. *It pretends that the great divide in* politics is variously between Cabinet and Opposition, Labour and Tory, Whitehall and Parliament. The true divide is quite different. It is between politics and economics, between the day-to-day craving for glamour of a presidential Downing Street, and the long-term realism of the Treasury. On the one hand, Downing Street is led by the Prime Minister, his eye fixed on the next election, with a raucous following of *spendthrift Cabinet ministers.* MPs of all parties, lobbyists, the media, pollsters and focus groups. All cry for more. On the other is the Treasury, led by the Chancellor. It is nothing but the Treasury, a cadre of officials hardened by adversity and solitude, a freemasonry of steel. Downing Street is the ego of politics, the perpetual triumph of hope over experience. The Treasury is the converse. It is the id.

Rivalry between these estates of the realm is not essentially personal. Prime Minister and Chancellor usually start out as close political friends. They rarely stay that way. Margaret Thatcher and John Major began as close *allies* of *all* their Chancellors, and ended as enemies. The division is institutional and unavoidable.

These two camps would have gone into yesterday's Budget process with diametrically opposed ambitions. The virtual Budget of Mr Blair and his allies would have pressed for lower taxes and higher reliefs. They would want to keep mortgage interest subsidies, leave pensions premiums alone and be kind to company cars. Mr Blair's Budget would protect child benefit, go carefully on Workfare and fight to save duty-free. It would seek "pockets of cash" for a stream of high-profile initiatives: loans-for-en*terprise, books-for-schools, comput*ers-for-teachers, subsidies to Rover and cash for movie moguls. Mr Blair would like to decentralise and reduce bureaucracy. He would like to be kind to everybody, except perhaps the Labour Party. His Budget would have something for all the focus groups, for car drivers, out-of-*town shoppers,* housebuilders, Sainsbury's and even *The Sun.* He wants to be liked.

Simon Jenkins

Mr Brown's virtual Budget would have been completely different, indeed in many respects the precise opposite. He would end tax reliefs wherever *they lurk: on mort*gages, pensions premiums and company cars. He would charge for urban congestion and levy tolls on every motorway, and he would take all the money to the Exchequer. He would have been, and is, appalled at plans to bail out *manufacturing industry with subsi*dies, even if dressed up as "enterprise initiatives". He is against decentralisation, and certainly against local government, London Tubes, Rover subsidies and foreign wars. He is wildly against focus groups.

What we saw yesterday was these two Budgets hacked cleverly into one. Mr Brown could only repeat his annual adherence to sound money and total control of planned spending, an ideology borrowed from his and Mr Blair's shared guru, Baroness Thatcher, and now christened Blatcherism. Macroeconomics is politically dead. The Budget argument is over microeconomics, the nursery slopes of economic management on which Mr Brown yesterday had fun. Here he won for the Treasury the battle against mortgage subsidies, though not against company car drivers or housebuilders. He failed to tax child benefit, but won green taxes. He is determined to get new transport *taxes going to the* Exchequer.

Mr Brown made no mention yesterday of his milch-cow, which is to be local government. Council taxes are expected to rise by 8 to 14 per cent, three times inflation, and with no rise in local discretion or accountability. Council tax is the most cunning of all stealth taxes, since it can be *raised to boast* Treasury generosity, yet blamed on local politicians. On display yesterday was Britain's new public sector: a cascade of highly publicisable one-off initiatives, for everything from Third World debt to computers in every home. *These initiatives are* of a sort that, until recently (and in any other country), would have been the responsibility of subordinate tiers of government. In Britain the Treasury pays for and controls such detailed supplies as school books, hospital waiting lists, science grants, and film-making. Such meticulous centralisation makes impossible any reduction in bureaucracy. The new Treasury control is the dawn of government by inspection, now booming under Mr Brown.

The final Budget is undoubtedly a political success. But why could we not have been shown the others? Today the House of Commons starts a wholly synthetic Budget debate, led by Labour and Conservative spokesmen. It is meaningless. The real debate, between the proponents of the first two Budgets, is over. All we know of that debate are occasional leaks, as over child benefit or carbon taxes, or when a social security minister resigns.

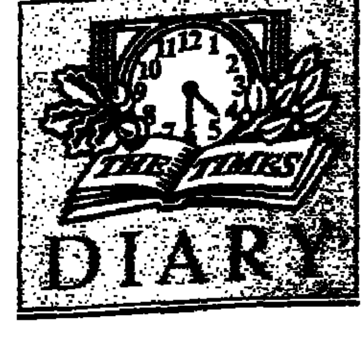
The secrecy of British government is a cliché, but like the best clichés, it is true. The pre-Budget debate is kept secret not because the outcome is "market-sensitive". Market-sensitive changes, for instance in Peps and tax reliefs, are nowadays signalled well in advance, and rightly so. Secrecy is for a different reason. It is to protect the esteem of *ministers who might lose* arguments. It is to maintain the fiction that modern government is not about debate but about discipline. *This fiction shows an arrogance* towards the people that only a politician could entertain.

When I recently reported that John Prescott's department had lost a titanic fight with the Treasury over an aspect of local finance, *Mr Prescott flatly denied it.* He said it was simply not true, and told the House of Commons the same. His denial was a complete whopper, yet *somehow such* whoppers are excused as conforming to constitutional convention. Keeping the people in the dark about the way their money is spent is fine. Keeping them in the dark about their being kept in the dark is equally fine. Arguments within government are like MI6 in the old days: their existence must be deniable. In Opposition, this Government believed in open government. Now, openness can get stuffed.

I would like to see a Green Paper, say each new year, that sets out with reasonable frankness the two Budgets, that of the Treasury and that of "the Rest". It would indicate spending department bids and the Treasury's preferred response. Like any normal Green Paper, it would discuss the arguments for and against mooted changes in taxes, benefits, reliefs and subsidies. It would enable discussion to take place within a context of public spending constraint. It would mean ministers lobbying in public, as well as private. It would enable Parliament to hold a Budget debate last month, not this week when it is too late.

Such a Green Paper would reveal not a split government but a thinking government, a discussing government, an intelligent government. Instead we have one that treats us all as dumb.

comment@the-times.co.uk



Heroic Hewitt

JAMES HEWITT is to claim he was a life-saving Gulf War hero in an *autobiography* he is writing in secret, which will detail his affair with Diana, Princess of Wales.

The former acting major will say he refused orders to blow up an unidentified fleet of desert tanks.

"I wasn't a coward, like people say," he tells me. "I argued with my brigadier for 45 minutes and really put my foot down." As luck *had* it, the 14 tanks turned out to be Allied forces from the 14th/20th King's Hussars.

Although he admits to being "not very interesting", the ginger one feels there is more to his existence than his turn with the Princess.

"I never had an apology from that brigadier," he says. "All *he* ever said was that I was almost a great soldier. No one else will blow my trumpet, so I now have to."

The Ministry of Defence is unfamiliar with the story: "14 tanks! Well, this is a new version. Um, take it all with a sack of salt."

OH, to be a Labour MP. Claire Ward, the 26-year-old "Blair babe", says: "I don't always admit to being an MP. If I'm in a bar with people I don't know, to say you are a Labour MP is not always a good move. I have been known to say I am a solicitor."

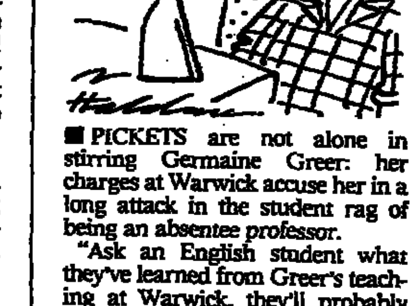
■ POLLY SAMSON, the delectable wife of Pink Floyd's Dave Gilmour (below) and ex-muse of the



poet Heathcote Williams, is to burst into print — controversially. Her short stories are billed as "dark" (one is written from the perspective of a baby-snatcher). "Maybe it's a reaction," says the former publishing babe, "to having to be professionally delightful."

THE "dirty" Streets of London are the new inspiration for the earthy artists, Gilbert and George. For their next exhibition, they will have their photographs set against Swallow Street, Spurt Street, Organ Lane, Spanking Hill Wood and sundry other enclaves whose innocence is forever lost. "Sex," they explain, "is the most important thing in art and represents the power of living."





■ PICKETS are not alone in stirring Germaine Greer: her charges at Warwick accuse her in a long attack in the student rag of being an absentee *professor.*

"Ask an English student what they've learned from Greer's teaching at Warwick, they'll probably look blankly," it ventures. "In her two-day week, the elusive Greer takes one seminar and invites selected students for sherry.

"Finalists and first-years have been lectured by her *once.* Second-years have apparently not had the pleasure at all . . . For all the impact she's had on the average Warwick student Greer might as well still be at Cambridge." The average professor earns £40,000. I tried to ask Ms Greer if she earned her dosh but she was not around to answer.

HIS defence of our island independence is heroic, but what is Michael Portillo chuntering on about? "Britain stands halfway between the Continent and the United States geographically."

■ STING now admits that all that banging on about rainforests was a terrible bore. " 'Shut up and sing you pillock', was the considered response of the vox populi," he moans, thumbing his primer. But worrying news for the Indian sub-continent: the great man tells *High Life* that this is his next patch to save — first stop the Ganges.

SELF-realisation. High-charging Anthony Julius is to give a lecture — on why lawyers are unpopular.

JASPER GERARD

'God knows why they asked, I am not an actor, I had never done a voiceover, but the Saatchis wanted a man to whom cats would listen'

Is it any wonder that, when it comes to T. S. Eliot, pond-owners are ambivalent? On the one hand, he spoke for all of them in imperishably declaring April to be the cruellest month: while pond-owners do not care one way or the other about *breeding lilacs out of a dead* land, they worry themselves sick, every April, about breeding frogs out of a dead pond, because April is when frogs descend upon our ponds to breed, and when, as the direct result, the cruellest things happen to them.

Which brings us, unfortunately, to T. S. Eliot's *other hand*: for he loved not frogs, but cats, the more practical the better, and, thanks to an irony which must have the old Modernist spinning gleefully in his grave, it is practical cats which are the very source of the April cruelty.

Here's how it it works. Of all the many things they like killing, cats like killing frogs best. Frogs are not only less elusive than mice and sparrows, they taste better. We know this because if they didn't, Frenchmen would be called Mice or Sparrows.

However, for 11 months of the year, frogs are elusive enough to *escape the feline diet, since,* as soon as a paw appears at the edge of their pond, the frogs leap from reed or lily-pad and scull rapidly out of harm's way. But they cannot do this in April, because in April frogs have big heavy things on their backs. They have other frogs there. Which, for cats, practical enough to have sussed this out, means *in flagrante delicious*; and, for me, means April days spent heartbrokenly *shovelling up the inedible* bits of lovers for whom, just as the earth moved, so did the cat.

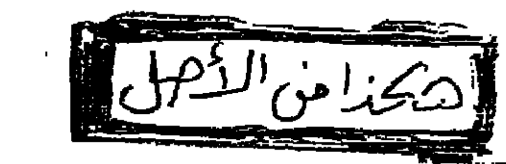
For 30 Springs, I have sought *to stop this happening, but there* was no way of deterring the cats from the pond. Until this year. This April, I shall know what to do, and I shall know it thanks to none other than the brothers Saatchi, who gave me what I know by know*ing more about me* than I knew myself. Five weeks ago, their agency phoned me out of the blue and invited me to audition for a TV commercial. God knows why, I am not an actor, I had never done a voiceover before, but I thought why not, so a car came to Cricklewood and took me to Soho, where I was told that Maurice and Charles were breaking the advertising mould with the first-ever Whiskas commercial designed to appeal not to owners, but to cats. *Months of research had gone* into finding the sort of screen images which attracted feline attention, and all that the resultant film now lacked was a soundtrack designed to do the same. The Saatchis, in short, wanted a man to whom cats would listen. *They had auditioned* many, to no effect: night after night, the brothers had wept into their pillows, and gnawed their teddies furless. Until, oh joy, the night of January 20. That night, they slept like tops. They had found their man. They had gone to Cricklewood and come back with Doctor Dolittle.

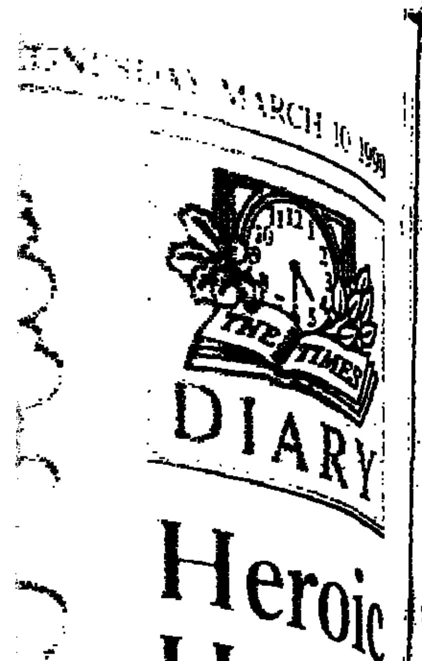
Alan Coren

A week later, the commercials started going out. Friends rang up and said was that you talking to cats just now, and I said yes, put your cat on, ha-ha-ha, all that, but *the one uncertainty* among all this jollity was, of course, about whether the cats would respond. Would they mark what they had seen and I had said, and begin dragging their owners down to Tesco to strop themselves against the pyramids of Whiskas in purring supplication?

Well, a month has passed, the world has held its breath, and at last, this week, the results are in. M & C Saatchi just rang me. They were beside themselves. They could hardly speak. Research had shown that 8 out of 10 cats had preferred the Whiskas advert: the agency had miles of footage from hundreds of cameras focused on thousands of cats who had lain yawning on rug and sofa, absently licking this and that while countless other adverts jostled on their fireside *screens, but had suddenly* sprung up, ears pricked, eyes rolling, saliva spouting, when a voice murmured into the room, speaking fluent Cat.

You will cry, lucky devil, his options are endless, he is sitting on a goldmine, he could stick up a brass plate saying Cat Interpreter, No Job Too Large Or *Small,* All Credit Cards Accepted, he could be the millionaire star of *One Man And His Cat,* with a couple of keen tabbies he could break the record for sheep in a phone-booth, never mind pantomime, this man could train a cat to do anything, punters would cross oceans to watch the pas-de-deux from *Dick Whittington* — but I have my sights on none of these. I want to make only a tape-recording which will spend April running continuously beside my pond, warning: "These frogs are being genetically modified." That should keep *the cats off.* Well, *8 out of 10,* anyway.





ESSENCE OF BROWN

A cunning Budget by a commanding Chancellor

Rarely has a Chancellor succeeded as well as Gordon Brown in synchronising the cycles of politics and the economy. The current slowing in the economy is at the midway point between general elections: the ensuing boom, he hopes, will coincide with the next time that new Labour faces a national poll. He planned his unpopular tax increases and spending stringency for the early years of the Parliament; the political rewards stretch on ahead.

In many ways yesterday's Budget seemed too good to be true. Personal taxes were cut; help for children and the elderly was increased; corporate taxes were reduced and public services were given more cash: yet the overall fiscal stance remains prudent. How can this be reconciled? Because spending has been, and will be, even lower than planned. And because, as William Hague pointed out, Mr Brown's "stealth taxes" of his first two years are only now being chipped away by tax cuts.

This underspending is an achievement of which the Chancellor deserves to be proud. Total expenditure will be £18 billion lower than expected over the next three years. Social security accounts for £9 billion of that. Welfare reforms seem to be paying dividends before they are even enacted, by propelling the workshy off the registers.

The tax cuts, meanwhile, are staged for maximum electoral advantage. While the 10p starting rate comes in this year, the 22p basic rate and increased child benefit arrive next year, offset by the abolition of the married couple's allowance and mortgage interest tax relief. The best year, at least for couples with children, will be 2001, when the children's tax credit is introduced. That, uncoincidentally, is the likeliest year for the next general election.

There are many aspects to yesterday's Budget that are not quite what they appeared on television. The headline-grabbing 10p starting rate for small businesses sounds excellent. But it will apply only to the first £10,000 of profit. A small business making a profit of £10,000 or less barely deserves to be incorporated. This will lead to a rash of unnecessary incorporations by self-employed people — which will be great news only for accountants.

Overall, however, the Budget looks like being highly politically successful. Most working-class and middle-class people will be better off. So will most children and all pensioners. Why has Mr Brown produced a pre-election Budget now? It cannot harm the prospects for Labour candidates in this year's local, Scottish, Welsh and European elections. And the children's tax credit needs plenty of planning. But the timing also reflects Labour's realism about its present and past. Voters must see the results in their pay packet in April 2001. Hearing Labour promises is not enough.

This thinking does not preclude more cuts in the basic rate of income tax: they, unlike other measures, can be implemented almost at once. Mr Brown may well be aiming for the 20p basic rate that was the Tories' dream. Meanwhile, opposition to his fiscal measures is becoming increasingly difficult. Yesterday's tax cuts were in "kitchen table" areas that everyone understands, such as income tax. The earlier tax rises were in dark fields such as advanced corporation tax on dividends.

When companies cannot complain and Tories struggle to oppose, Labour backbenchers ought to be suspicious. Yet Mr Brown has also managed to deliver on many old Labour objectives. The party's main pledge in the 1992 election was to boost pensions and child benefit. This has now been done but not by hugely increasing the taxes of the better-off. Labour has long wanted pensions to track rises in earnings, not prices. This Mr Brown has done, but not for the very expensive universal state pension, only for the minimum income guarantee which tops up the pensions of the poorest. And he has boosted spending on public services, but in an affordable fashion. This Budget represents the essence of new Labour, delivering many of its traditional aims in a sophisticated and popular way which puts its opponents in all sorts of trouble.

HOWARD'S END

A politician more often right than popular

They also serve who sometimes stand, and lose. It is not essential to lead a political party to lead opinion and change the country. Michael Howard's decision to stand down as Shadow Foreign Secretary has, inevitably, provoked memories of his failure to win the Tory leadership, a failure partly brought about by the personal criticisms of his former lieutenant Ann Widdecombe. But while Mr Howard failed in that ambition, he succeeded in a way given to few. As Home Secretary he turned an historical tide and switched the terms of political trade. As the Chancellor considers the praise which his Budget have earned this morning he should give some thought to Mr Howard. It is not always necessary to win your party's leadership election, or the opinion pollsters' beauty contests, to win a favourable verdict from posterity.

Mr Howard's political career was blighted by the defect of one of his great virtues. He was a formidable master of detail and an always polished advocate; but his facility at the dispatch box led many to conclude he was all polish and no oak. It was a conclusion as unfair as it was widespread, and unbudgeable. There may even have been a streak of anti-Semitism in it. It is noticeable that one of the few politicians to rival Mr Howard in his capacity to provoke unfair vilification is Peter Mandelson. As with Mr Howard, the criticisms of "slipperiness" hit an unfortunate note and damaged a talented minister.

Mr Mandelson, like Mr Howard, has not yet received the credit which is his due. In Mr Howard's case, it was the Government's approach to crime which he transformed. He came to the Home Office determined to tackle a liberal orthodoxy which regarded a rising prison population with greater horror than rising crime figures. Mr Howard challenged departmental defeatism, pioneered changes to the criminal justice system and restored a proper emphasis on punishment. His determination to make prisons work, by instituting a regime which was "decent but austere", provoked howls of execration and predictions of uproar in the jails. The consequence, however, was a decline in criminality and a Labour Party converted to toughness on crime and private prisons.

Mr Howard was, however, much more than the right sort of penal reformer. He showed himself sensitive to rising public concern that civil society was under siege. As Home Secretary he instituted the Philip Lawrence Awards to promote good citizenship. His concern for the fabric of national life reflected a deep but unshowy patriotism which informed his practical and persuasive Euroscepticism.

There have been other ministers who never quite made it to the top of the greasy pole who have influenced the nation's life profoundly. Nye Bevan, Iain Macleod, Enoch Powell and Keith Joseph all, in their own way, left a deeper mark on the country than ostensibly more successful rivals. Michael Howard would be the first to demur when placed next to such exalted company, but in his own way he can take some pride in having been a success during the uneasy Major years. The truly successful politician has to be popular, and right. But Mr Howard should console himself that it is better if history judges one to be the latter rather than the former.

A NEW BRIDGE

Readers of *The Times* give generously for Honduras

For the past five months the farmers of the fertile valleys in Olancho province have been unable to send their produce to the Honduran capital. Cut off by the destruction of the vital bridge that spanned the Amarateca River, they have been unable to repair their homes, sell their crops or reconnect their shattered communities with the rest of Honduras as it struggles to overcome the effects of Hurricane Mitch. Thanks to the generosity of *Times* readers, their lifeline is to be restored. Next month work will begin on erecting a huge British-designed Bailey bridge supplied by the country's leading bridge engineers and paid for by donations to our Christmas appeal.

Readers have raised more than £100,000 to pay for a bridge at Rio Hondo. The response to our appeal has been extraordinary: some 1,491 readers sent money, some making very substantial donations, which has been topped up by a generous donation from Oxfam. Mabey & Johnson, whose ingenious modification of the wartime Bailey bridge design has proved a lifesaver around the world, has already made a free survey of the site and will this month start shipping out the steel sections.

The announcement that funds have been raised to pay for "*The Times* Bridge" coincides with a visit to the stricken country by President Clinton. The Americans are promising substantial aid, focusing their efforts on rebuilding some of the 98 bridges that were washed away. Until the country's transport network can be repaired, all other reconstruction will be delayed. Currently materials cannot be sent to remote villages; farmers cannot sell their crops to pay for the rebuilding of their homes; labourers cannot find work; and Honduras cannot resume the exports which alone can raise money to service its heavy international debts.

Experts reckon that it may take another 30 years for Honduras to regain the standard of living it lost in one terrible week. At first politicians and farmers were numbed by the scale of the disaster. What encouraged them was the swift response of the rest of the world. Britain has historically had little connection with Central America. Yet this country has been among the most open-hearted and imaginative in its determination to help.

Thanks to the response of *Times* readers, Oxfam, Mabey & Johnson and hundreds of engineers who have given their expertise free, an entire community now has a bridge of hope to mark a path to recovery. For this they — and we — thank all those who have responded so magnificently to our appeal.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Heat in Hague's new Tory kitchen

From Mr Keith Robinson

Sir, The problem with Mr Hague's continual relaunching of Toryism (report, March 8) is that each time he does it, many Tories and Tory-doubters of around middle-age feel he is moving the party further and further away from its old, proven image of capable Conservative government.

As a fresh new face Mr Hague initially had the chance to resurrect the party image in the areas in which it was failing, and we wished him well. However, the stage has been reached where I, for one, feel little affinity for the party or its frontbench spokesmen and women. I believe the party should be bold enough to manoeuvre into place a personality who will remind people of its previous strengths, such as Michael Portillo or Chris Patten, and thus relieve William Hague of his uphill struggle to reinforce his own image by overfiddling with Toryism.

If the policy gap between Labour and Conservative has really shrunk so much, then the choice becomes more and more one of personalities. Let's have someone better able to maximise the Tories' remaining policy advantages from the basis of personal strength and experience.

Yours faithfully,
KEITH ROBINSON,
The Wilderness,
Coronation Road, Littlewick Green,
Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 3RA.
the.robinsons@btinternet.com
March 8.

From Miss Beryl M. Goldsmith

Sir, "Kitchen table Conservatism" is certainly not for those of us who have no intention of apologising for 18 years of Conservative administrations elected at four consecutive general elections.

Mr Hague should bear in mind that new Labour polled *fewer* (two million fewer) votes than did the Tories in 1992. For all their swagger, Liberal Democrats' vote was also well down.

Self-flagellation is an unbecoming pastime — especially on the kitchen table. The leaders of the Conservatives should stand up straight and follow the *principles* by which this country was governed for an unprecedented period and which led to genuine opportunities for the enterprising and the brave.

Yours faithfully,
BERYL M. GOLDSMITH,
34 Thomas More House,
Barbican, EC2Y 8BT.
March 8.

From Mr Robert Goddard

Sir, I noted with interest that one of Mr William Hague's campaigning criteria is "being for things as well as against them". Not only does this sound like a recipe for disaster, but is it not akin to having one's cake and eating it, to use language that would resonate with voters?

Loyally yours,
ROBERT GODDARD,
Launcelot Fleming House,
Huntingdon Road,
Cambridge CB3 0DQ.
March 8.

From Mr P. R. Ridgway

Sir, I note that the Tory party is to concentrate on core issues, use plain language, be for things as well as against, look to the future, admit the mistakes of the past, maintain a sense of proportion and show absolute integrity. Fine; but what are they *going to say*?

Yours sincerely,
PHIL RIDGWAY,
27 Naverne Meadows,
Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 1HU.
March 8.

Withdrawal of legal aid

From Mr Benedict Birnberg

Sir, Against the almost unanimous opposition of the legal profession, the Government is to withdraw legal aid from most money claims and instead it has permitted lawyers to charge conditional fees.

If evidence is required of the effect this will have both on access to justice and on social evils, one need look no further than the collapse of the case of the 47 plaintiffs who sued the tobacco manufacturers Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco (report, February 27).

Their "no win, no fee" solicitors face expenses of £2.5 million, and in return for the companies not pursuing the litigants for costs, agreed not to take action against the two companies for ten years and against any tobacco firm for five years.

Class or multiparty actions like that of the tobacco litigants are a vital social resource, but if public funding is no longer available, which lawyer will risk bankrupting himself in future when taking on big and wealthy corporations?

The Government has yet to unveil its detailed plans for the Community Legal Service, but unless the service, which is to have a remit in cases involving "a wider public interest", fills the void left by the withdrawal of legal aid in such cases, what price community justice and wellbeing?

Yours faithfully,
BENEDICT BIRNBERG,
B. M. Birnberg & Co (solicitors),
103 Borough High Street, SE1 1NN.
March 1.

Profit and poverty in trade war

From Mrs Glenys Kinnock, MEP for South Wales East (Party of European Socialists Group (Labour))

Sir, The EU, as the world's largest trading bloc, faces threats from the US, hence the ongoing wrangling at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva (letters, March 5 and 8). We clearly face the challenge from a position of relative strength, and in the knowledge that retaliation is an option should it become necessary. Should the EU concede in any way to US bullying, what hope would there be for small countries?

There are deeper considerations here too. If we are to be blackmailed in this way on bananas, where will we be challenged next? Blatant manipulation of the WTO disputes procedure should not be permitted in this, or in any other case.

I am also concerned that Alex Salmond, the leader of the Scottish National Party, is using the clear threat to Scottish jobs brought about by the dispute to undermine the Labour Party's campaign in the Scottish parliamentary elections. I believe, however, that the UK Government's resolve to support our Caribbean banana producers will not be weakened by his tactics.

Finally it is important to ask who is actually driving US trade policy. What is the role of Chiquita — the multinational banana company based in Cincinnati? The Latin American producers have two thirds of the market, so why do Chiquita resent the 7 per cent of that market currently held by Caribbean countries?

It is important that US politicians know that in Europe we are aware of the machinations which have preceded this banana row. Are they not aware that they are threatening the livelihoods of poor farmers who have a unique dependence on a single commodity? If they claim they are not, then we should counsel them that the outcome of their actions will be increased drug growing, drug dealing and migration, and the US will be the first to feel the impact of that. The trouble is that it would be too late for the farmers of the Windward Islands.

Yours faithfully,
GLENYS KINNOCK,
European Parliament,
97 Rue Belliard, Brussels B-1047.
March 9.

From Mr Paul Droop

Sir, Libby Purves ("This harvest of greed", March 9) should not believe for an instant that the banana "war" is anything but a case of enormously profitable European fruit distributors protecting their patch against enormously profitable North American fruit distributors. To make all parties, and most particularly poorer nations, better off, the answer is free trade.

Rather than aim to ensure that Caribbean countries remain subsistence farmers for the foreseeable future, Britain should encourage full and equal access to European markets for all countries, regardless of what part of the developing world they come from. At the same time, but now from a position of strength, the EU could demand similar access to other markets.

The only winners in this protected market game are the multinational European fruit distributors, who take the lion's share of value from every pound spent on bananas in Europe. Growers receive a pittance.The World Trade Organisation was founded on the strength of widespread belief in the benefits of free trade. It deserves Britain's unqualified support.

Yours etc,
PAUL DROOP,
88 Clarence Road,
Wimbledon, SW19 8QD.
paul.droop@usa.net
March 9.

Older teachers

From Mr David Walker

Sir, Your leading article, "Bring back Mr Chips", and report (March 2) talk good sense. I have been applying for teaching jobs for some time, aged 52, having taken a long break from the classroom and gained wide management experience and qualifications. The extra £2,000-£3,000 payable to me over a new entrant puts off some schools with tight budgets, but a greater deterrent is the feeling that an older applicant is less malleable, adaptable or able to cope with all the new procedures.

I submit that we mature applicants are just that — we adapt better, being perhaps less prone to fixed ideals, are more detached and, by virtue of our experience elsewhere, can certainly assimilate the paperwork.

The trouble is, as in all jobs when you get turned down, "ageism" is a moveable target and hard to pin down.

Yours,
DAVID WALKER,
8 White Hart Road,
Orpington BR6 0HD.
March 2.

From Mrs Valerie Price

Sir, Your leading article mirrors the experience of my daughter, who taught art but found that, like music, her subject lacked support compared with others in the curriculum.

She decided to broaden her qualifications to include the teaching of English to foreign students. After teaching for three years in Spain she returned home to find that she was deemed to have reached the top of her salary scale. At the age of 35 she was too expensive for employment as a full-time teacher and for the past four years has had to contend with temporary employment. What a waste.

The inflexibility of the incremental scale seems to leave no room for manoeuvre. I guess that many of the 8,000 unemployed mature teachers would be prepared to negotiate an adjustment to their salary if it led to full-time employment.

The children in our schools could only benefit.

Yours sincerely,
V. M. PRICE,
Torvale, Lloyd Road,
Stockwell End,
Wolverhampton WV6 9AU.
March 2.

Bombing Iraq

From Mr Patrick Butterly

Sir, Simon Jenkins's views (article, March 5: letters, March 6, 8) on the Anglo-American bombing of Iraq were both heartwarming in their honesty and distressing in their content.

Politicians have to make moral judgments and decisions in attempting to foresee the consequences of the measures they propose. But they owe a duty to the electorate to explain why they have come to the conclusions they have. Despite the Secretary of State for Defence's letter, I still do not believe we have had an adequate explanation of the bombing of Iraq.

Yours faithfully,
P. BUTTERLY,
1 Vine Cottages, Downs View,
West Looe, Cornwall PL13 2EY.
March 8.

From Dr Peter Brooke

Sir, Simon Jenkins says of the blast and fragmentation bombs we are using in Iraq that "these weapons are the cruellest harbingers of death". But there is worse. There is, for example, slow death by starvation.

This death has been visited on something between 500,000 (the lowest estimate) and a million Iraqi civilians, mainly children, over the past eight years by the deliberate, fully conscious policy of successive British and American Governments, and this policy has been unquestioningly endorsed by nearly all sections of our intellectual and political life.

Under the circumstances, we are in no condition to express any moral superiority over other peoples in the world — be they Serbs, Hutus, Turks, or anyone else.

We cannot any more regard ourselves as being a people worthy of respect.

Yours sincerely,
PETER BROOKE,
4 Camden Court,
Camden Road, Brecon LD3 7RP.
March 6.

Don't mention the war

From Mr Paul Ross

Sir, I admired Roger Boyes's incisive analysis of British newspaper coverage of our relationship with Europe, "Why must the British tabloids always mention the war?" (March 8), but I was baffled when my eye fell on the headline below: "Admirer of Hitler wins poll in Austria."

Yours faithfully,
PAUL ROSS,
242B Shirland Road, W9 3JF.
paul@paulross.demon.co.uk
March 8.

TV hint

From Mr Tony Owen

Sir, I notice that, on BBC1, the Chancellor's Budget statement is followed by the film *True Lies*.

Yours faithfully,
TONY OWEN,
12 The Maltings,
Orpington, Kent BR6 0DH.
March 9.

Catholics and charity

From the Chief Executive of Comic Relief

Sir, Comic Relief takes the spending of money donated by the public very seriously. All of the money goes to tackle poverty and promote social justice — not a penny to "morally dubious family planning projects" (Mr Alan Whelan's letter, March 4). We are committed to knowledge and education over ignorance and prejudice.

Some Red Nose money has gone to projects in Africa which reduce the damage done to women and girls by abortion and promote maternal health and safety. We have long funded CAFOD, Christian Aid and other such organisations, which support our work fully.

Yours,
KEVIN CAHILL,
Chief Executive, Comic Relief,
74 New Oxford Street, WC1A 1EF.
March 4.

Letters may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Pontius Pilate's place in history

From Mr A. J. Russell

Sir, There is one odd thing about Pontius Pilate that might be added to Peter Stothard's interesting article (Weekend, March 6). Weak, wicked or whatever he was, his name is one of only two (apart from Jesus) preserved in the Nicene Creed recited regularly by a billion people as a summary of their faith; as the revered Virgin Mary is the other, and there is no room in its compact phrases for heroes even of the calibre of John the Baptist or St Peter, this seems to be a very strange honour for him.

In fact, the Creed's statement that Jesus "suffered under Pontius Pilate" is an economical way of making a major point, rooting the Christian faith in historical fact rather than spiritual myth.

However, there is also a delicious irony, pointed out by Ronald Knox in *The Creed in Slow Motion* (Sheed and Ward, 1950). Pilate, the man who so famously asked "What is truth?", is now stuck in the middle of the Creed, "as if the Church were determined to go on saying to him, to the end of time, 'Here, you fool, this is!'"

Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN RUSSELL,
60 High Street, Lytchett Matravers,
Poole, Dorset BH16 6BH.
March 8.

From Ms Jean Goldman

Sir, I read with interest Peter Stothard's article and noted the remark made by his yoghurt salesman guide that "it was the the Jews who had killed Christ".

In 1965 the Vatican decree *Nostra Aetate* repudiated the charge of deicide which for centuries had been made against the Jews, and in 1985 the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jewish People published its *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis*. This document acknowledged that the gospels have been subject to long and often complicated editorial work and that "certain controversies reflect Christian-Jewish relations long after the time of Jesus".

However, I wonder how many laypeople actually read such documents? Perhaps it is time for the Church to take the bold step of excising gospel material which is of doubtful veracity and therefore offensive to Jews (in particular Matthew xxvii, 25): or is the New Testament exempt from the law concerning the publication of racially offensive material?

Yours faithfully,
JEAN GOLDMAN,
73 Burleigh Road,
Enfield EN1 1NU.
richiemandjg@cwcom.net
March 8.

Shark practice

From Mr Jack Palmer

Sir, A grandfather's credibility is in the balance. In the Navy, in the Far East in the early Fifties, I saw a survival poster advising us what to do if our ship sank and left us in the water. If a shark approached it was important to recognise which variety it was, so that one's response could be tailored accordingly. With one type, a great hullabaloo would scare it away. Another variety would be more likely to attack.

There were pictures of the different species, and I remember doubting my ability to remember which was which. The defence that I remember most clearly was that one should punch a certain type on the nose.

It is this last that has strained the credulity of the post-*Jaws* generation beyond breaking point. I know this story to be true, but my unsupported word no longer convinces the youngsters.

If there is an Admiral out there who not only remembers the poster but perhaps can relate first-hand experience of punching a shark, I would be most grateful.

Yours truly,
JACK PALMER,
6 Prospect Place,
Chapelhay, Weymouth DT4 8JY.
March 9.

Spice baby

From Mrs Felicity Luke

Sir, David Beckham and Victoria Adams are following a literary example (letters, March 6). In *Bleak House* the Bagnet children are called Woolwich, Quebec and Malta, after the military barracks in which each was born.

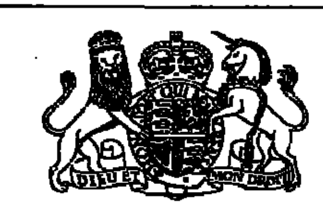
Yours faithfully,
FELICITY LUKE,
18 Regent's Park Road,
London NW1 7TX.
March 6.

Court napping

From His Honour Judge Barrington Black

Sir, The new series of *Kavanagh QC* is so true to life (Television review, March 9) that I fell fast asleep during the last ten minutes of counsel's speech to the jury.

Yours faithfully,
BARRINGTON BLACK,
Harrow Crown Court,
Hailsham Drive, Harrow HA1 4TU.
March 9.



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 9: The Queen held an Investiture this morning at Buckingham Palace.

The Hon Mary Morrison has succeeded Lady Dugdale as Lady in Waiting to The Queen.

March 9: The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, Voluntary Service Overseas, this morning received Mr David Green at Buckingham Palace.

His Royal Highness, President, later chaired a Meeting of The Royal Mint Advisory Committee at Buckingham Place.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, today attended the Federation of London Youth Clubs Lunch at Tallow Chandlers' Hall, Dowgate Hill, London EC4.

His Royal Highness, President Emeritus, World Wide Fund for Nature -- WWF International, this afternoon received Dr Chris Elliot.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, this evening attended The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers' Reception at Buckingham Palace.

CLARENCE HOUSE
March 9: The Lady Angela Oswald has succeeded Mrs Michael Gordon Lennox as Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 9: The Prince of Wales this morning arrived in the Argentine Republic where he was greeted on arrival by His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Argentina, Señor Guido Di Tella.

His Royal Highness afterwards was received by the President of the Republic, Dr Carlos Menem, at the Casa Rosada.

The Prince of Wales later laid wreaths at the San Martin and the South Atlantic Monuments.

His Royal Highness then visited the British Arts Centre in Buenos Aires. His Royal Highness, as President of The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, subsequently attended a luncheon for business leaders.

This afternoon His Royal Highness visited the British Hospital in Buenos Aires where he met patients and staff and laid the foundation stone of a new emergency unit.

The Prince of Wales this evening attended a dinner given in his honour by the President of Argentina at the Alvear Palace Hotel.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 9: The Prince Edward, Chairman, this evening attended a Dinner of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Young Canadians Challenge Charter for Business at the Vancouver Club, British Columbia, Canada.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 9: The Princess Royal today carried out the following engagements in Tokyo, Japan:

Her Royal Highness this morning visited HELP Asian Women's Shelter (battered wives).

The Princess Royal later visited Grace House (maternity centre for women in need).

Her Royal Highness subsequently attended the Liberty Promotion Reception at the British Ambassador's Residence.

The Princess Royal had lunch at the Ark Hills Club with Young British Residents of Tokyo.

Her Royal Highness this afternoon visited the Shinjuku Sports Centre for Disabled at the National Welfare Centre.

The Princess Royal later attended the launch of the Exhibition "Millennium Science Forum" at the British Embassy.

Her Royal Highness this evening attended a Reception for the "Noble Horse Exhibition" at the new Otani Hotel.

The Princess Royal later attended a Dinner given by Her Majesty's Ambassador to Japan (His Excellency Sir David Wright) at his Residence.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 8: The Duke of Kent this morning called on the Emir of Bahrain to offer condolences on behalf of The Queen, on the death of the Emir, Sheikh Isa bin Sulman al-Khalifa, in Bahrain.

The Duke of Kent this evening returned to London Heathrow from Bahrain.

Mr Nicolas Adamson was in attendance.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 9: The Duke of Kent, President of the Royal United Services Institute, this morning presided over the Nato 50th Anniversary Conference, Banqueting House, Whitehall, London SW1.

His Royal Highness this evening attended the Nato 50th Anniversary Reception and Dinner, Banqueting House, Whitehall, London, SW1.

Birthdays today

Prince Edward celebrates his 35th birthday today.

Sir Lawrence Airey, former chairman, Board of Inland Revenue, 73; Sir Robert Bellinger, former president, National Savings Committee, 89; Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burnett, 86; Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, 52; Mr Fou Ts'ong, concert pianist, 65; Sir Angus Fraser, former chairman, Board of Customs and Excise, 71; Dame Margaret Fry, former chairman, National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations, 68; Rear-Admiral Sir John Garnier, 65; Sir Samuel Goldman, former civil servant, 87; Mr Warren Hawksley, director, Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse, 56; Mr Hugh Johnson, wine expert, 60; General Sir John Learmont, 65; Mr Tony Leonard, former Chief Constable, Humberside, 60; Lord Montague of Oxford, 67; Sir Graeme Odgers, former chairman, Monopolies and Mergers Commission, 65; Captain Michael Torrens-Spence, former Lord-Lieutenant of Armagh, 85; Mr Peter Wormald, former Registrar General for England and Wales, 63.

Memorial service

Mr Peter Carey
A service of thanksgiving for the life of Mr Peter Carey was held yesterday at St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey. The Rev Robert Wright, Rector, officiated and the Right Rev Lord Coggan led the prayers.

Mr Oliver Parker read the lesson. Mr Jonathan Carey, brother, and Mr James Hughes-Hallett gave readings.

Mr Mark Malloch-Brown paid tribute and the Dean of Westminster pronounced the blessing. Among others present were:

Mrs Carey (widow), Dr and Mrs David Carey (father and mother), Mr and Mrs Alastair Carey (brother and sister-in-law), Miss Anne Carey (sister), Dr and Mrs William George (father-in-law and mother-in-law), Mr Philip George (brother-in-law), Mrs Jonathan Carey (sister-in-law) and other members of the family; Lady Coggan and other friends.

Hill House

Former pupils and staff of Hill House International Junior School are invited to a reception on April 23 to mark the 50th anniversary of the school's foundation. Please write to the school with your current address and dates at Hill House for full details and an invitation.

Luncheons

Tallow Chandlers' Company
The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron of the London Federation of Youth Clubs, attended a luncheon of the Tallow Chandlers' Company held yesterday at Tallow Chandlers' Hall. Mr R.A.B. Nicolle, Master, presided.

Newspaper Society
Ms Margaret McDonagh, General Secretary of the Labour Party, was the guest of honour at a Newspaper Society luncheon held yesterday at Bloomsbury House. Mr Charles Brims, Chief Executive of Portsmouth & Sunderland Newspapers and President of the Newspaper Society, was the host. Among others present were:

The Minister of Transport, the Chairman of Johnston Press, the Group Chief Executive of Bristol United Press, the Chief Executive of the Mirror Group, the Chief Executive of Trinity, the Managing Director of Northcliffe Newspapers, the Managing Director of Shropshire Newspapers, the Managing Director of the Adscene Group, the Managing Director of Mortons of Horncastle and the Editor of the *Newcastle Chronicle and Journal*.

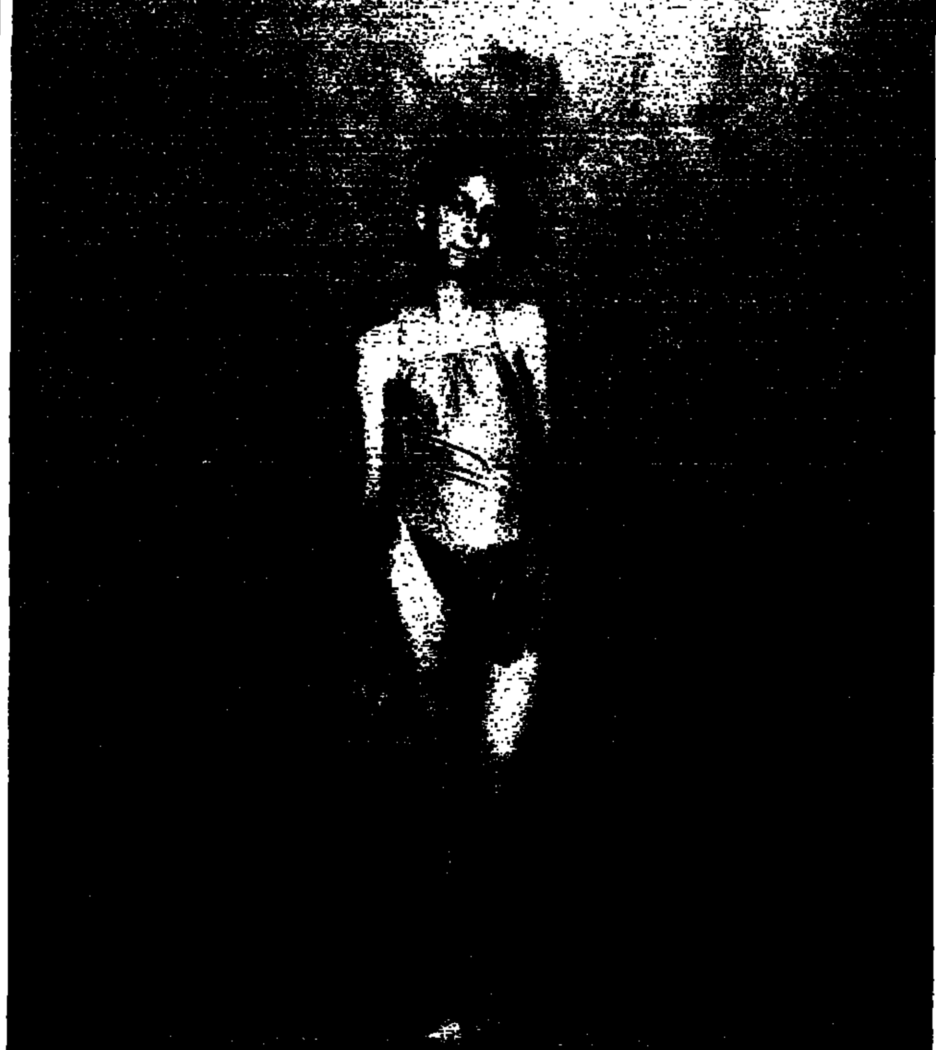
Service reception

London URNU
Rear-Admiral J.M. de Halpert was the guest of honour at the annual reception of the University of London Royal Naval Unit held last night at the Brompton Road Headquarters.

Lieutenant Commander T.M. Hulme, Officer-in-Charge, was the host.

Reception

Swaziland Society
The King of Swaziland, accompanied by the Inkhosikati, Prince Maguga and Princess Lomhlangano, attended a reception of the Swaziland Society held last night at the Hyatt Carlton Tower Hotel. Mr Brian Watkins, chairman, received the guests who included High Commissioners, Ambassadors and other members of the Diplomatic Corps.



The Dutch photographer Rineke Dijkstra has won the Citibank Private Bank Photography Prize for 1999. This picture of a young Polish girl on the beach at Kolobreg is one of a number of photographs she has taken of young people on beaches from Long Island to Ukraine, catching them between childhood and adulthood. Her work, and that of the four others shortlisted for the prize, are on show at The Photographers' Gallery, Great Newport Street, London WC2, (0171-831-1772) until April 3. The prize is sponsored by *The Times*

Today's royal engagements

The Duke of York will give a reception for Understanding Industry at St James's Palace this evening.
The Duke of Gloucester, as commissioner, English Heritage, will visit Bradbourne House, East Malling, Kent, at 12.15; and as grand prior, Order of St John, will open the new St John Ambulance County Headquarters in West Malling, at 2.30.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: John Benbow, admiral, Shrewsbury, 1653; John Playfair, geologist and philosopher, Benvie, Tayside, 1748; Leonard Raven-Hill, artist and cartoonist, Bath, 1867; Tamara Karsavina, prima ballerina, St Petersburg, 1885; Arthur Honegger, composer, Le Havre, 1892.
DEATHS: John Stuart Bute, 3rd Earl of Bute, Prime Minister 1762-63, London, 1792; Muzio Clementi, pianist and composer, Evesham, 1832; Taras Shevchenko, poet, Ukraine, 1861; Giuseppe Mazzini, Italian patriot, Pisa, 1872; Sir Charles Thomson, naturalist, Bonsyde, Lothian, 1882; Charles Frederick Worth, fashion designer, Paris, 1895; David Beatty, 1st Earl Beatty, Admiral of the Fleet, London, 1936; Mikhail Bulgakov, dramatist and novelist, Moscow, 1940; Laurence Binyon, poet, Reading, 1943; Jan Masaryk, statesman, Prague, 1948; Frank O'Connor, short story writer, Dublin, 1966; Konstantin Chernenko, General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party 1984-85, Moscow, 1985.
The Prince of Wales (King Edward VII) married Princess Alexandra of Denmark, 1863.
Velázquez's *Rokeby Venus* in the National Gallery was damaged during suffragette demonstrations in London, 1914.
A Japanese soldier, believing that the Second World War was still being fought, was found in hiding on Lubang Island in the Philippines, waiting to be relieved, 1974.

Appointments

British Wizo
Mrs Sarah Glyn has been appointed Chairman of British Wizo (Women's International Zionist Organisation), Mrs Loraine Warren Honorary Secretary, and Mrs Ruth Sotnick President.

Dinners

The Speaker
The Speaker gave a dinner last night in Speaker's House in honour of a Parliamentary Delegation from Latvia, led by Mr Janis Straume, Speaker of the Saeimas. The Ambassador of Latvia was present.

The other guests were:

Sir Alastair Goodlad, MP, Mr Ben Bradshaw, MP, Mr Richard Burden, MP, Mr Roger Casale, MP, Sir Sydney Chapman, MP, Mr Michael Colvin, MP, Mr Lawrence Cunliffe, MP, Mr Paul Flynn, MP, Mr John Grogan, MP, Mr Mike Hancock, MP, Mr Nick Hawkins, MP, Mr Stephen Hepburn, MP, Mrs Eleanor Laing, MP, Mr Michael Lord, MP, Mr David Marshall, MP, Mrs Christine Russell, MP, the Rev Martin Smyth, MP, Mr John Townend, MP, Dr Desmond Turner, MP, Mr John Wilkinson, MP, Miss Mary Fulton, Mr David Ramsay, Mr Jim Rodgers, Mr Silvestrs Savickis, Mrs Teresa Svilane, Canon Robert Wright and Mr Nicolas Bevan.

Pipeline Industries Guild
Ms Jane Asher, President of the National Autistic Society, and Mr Barry Took, were the guests of honour at the annual dinner of the Pipeline Industries Guild held last night at Grosvenor House.

Professor Andrew Palmer, president, was in the chair. Mr Roberto Pirani, chairman, also spoke.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr T.P. Cotton and Miss K.A. Pease
The engagement is announced between Tanguy, son of Mr John Cotton, of 19 Bourne Street, London, SW1, and Mrs Caroline Stoop, of 2 Avenue Ernestine, Brussels, and Karen, daughter of Captain and Mrs Nigel Pease, of Sledwich, Barnard Castle, Co Durham.

Mr J.F. Dent and Ms A. Fearon
The engagement is announced between Jeremy, younger son of Commander and Mrs Adrian Dent, of Sway, Hampshire, and Amanda, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs John Leberne, of Kensington, London.

Captain T.G. Fildes, RADC, and Miss M. Knight
The engagement is announced between Timothy Graham, son of Mr and Mrs Graham Fildes, of Prescot, Lancashire, and Michelle, daughter of Mr Roger Knight, of Mumbai, India, and Mrs Maureen Knight, of West Bergholt, Essex.

Mr A.J. Menzies and Miss N. McHugh
The engagement is announced between Anthony, son of Mr and Mrs John Menzies, of Knodishall, Suffolk, and Nicola, daughter of Mr and Mrs James McHugh, of Luton, Bedfordshire.

Mr A. Parascandolo and Miss J.A. Waterhouse
The forthcoming marriage is announced and will take place on May 3, 1999, at Wood Hall, Wetherby, between Alberto, son of Adolfo and the late Vittoria Parascandolo, of Naples, and Justine, daughter of Robert Waterhouse, of Milton Keynes, and Nick and Lynne Gomer, of Norwich.

Mr D.H.F. Parr and Miss A.K.M. Gribbon
The engagement is announced between Dominic, son of Mr and Mrs Trevor Parr, of Widmerpool, Nottinghamshire, and Annabel, daughter of Mr Antony Gribbon, of Maxstoke, Warwickshire, and of the Hon Mrs Malcolm Forbes, of Aberdeenshire.

Mr N.J.T. Phillips and Miss F.D. Daneman
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, son of Mr Peter Phillips and Mrs Janet Saward, and Flora, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Paul Daneman.

Mr R.J.N. Taylor and Miss E. Gerada-Azzopardi
The engagement is announced between Rupert, son of the late Mr Peter Taylor and of Mrs Patricia Taylor, of Hove, Sussex, and Emma, daughter of Mr and Mrs Eric Gerada-Azzopardi, of London, SW15, and Malta GC.

Church news

Appointments
The Rev Kenneth Goodger, formerly working in Australia: has been appointed Curate, Pimlico St Peter w Westminster Christ Church (London).
Prebendary Ann Hadley, Rector Myddle, and Vicar, Broughton (Lichfield): to be Priest-in-Charge, Harvington (Worcester), and Preb Emeritus, Lichfield Cathedral (Lichfield).
The Rev Geoffrey Harris, Honorary Curate, Okehampton w Inwardleigh, Bratton Clovelly w Germansweek; Northlew w Ashbury; and Bridestowe and Sourton (Exeter): has been appointed Priest-in-Charge, Ashwater, Halwill, Beaworthy, Clawton and Tetcott w Luffincott (same diocese).
The Rev Michael Hough, Rector, Gateshead Fell St John (Durham): to be also Area Dean of Gateshead (same diocese).
The Rev Arthur Hughes, Vicar, Castle Town (Lichfield): has been appointed also Chaplain, Staffordshire University (same diocese).
The Rev Timothy Hull, Co-ordinator, North Thames Ministerial Training Course, and Honorary Curate, Becontree West (Chelmsford): to be Team Rector, same benefice.
The Rev Diana Johnson, Curate, Birtley St John the Evangelist (Durham): to be Team Vicar, Gateshead St Edmund's Chapel w Holy Trinity & Venerable Bede (same diocese).
The Rev Peter Moorhouse, Chaplain, HMP Stocken (Peterborough): has been appointed Chaplain, HMP Everthorpe (York).
The Rev Ernest Pettengell, Priest-in-Charge, Weston super Mare Emmanuel (Bath & Wells): has been appointed Senior Chaplain, Staffordshire University (Lichfield).
The Rev Kenneth Reeves, with permission to officiate (Norwich): has been appointed Priest-in-Charge, Lakenham St Mark w Trowse (same diocese).
The Rev David Renshaw, Chaplain, Scarborough Hospital (York): to be Incumbent, Meppershall w Campton and Stondon (St Albans).
The Rev Elfrida Savigear, Priest-in-Charge, Butlers Marston and the Pillertons w Ettington, and Alderminster and Halford (Coventry): has been appointed Priest-in-Charge, Bicknoller w Crowcombe and Sampford Brett (Bath & Wells).

The Institute of Mathematics

The following have been granted Chartered Mathematician status and Fellowship of the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications:

Prof Dr J Ahsan, Dr J A G Aston, Mr J D Barritt, Miss A E Boswell, Dr B D Brunson, Mr P Cameron, Dr E K W Chu, Mr K A Cliffe, Dr C M Comiskey, Mrs K J Cooper, Mr J G Cooper, Dr B H Crichton, Dr S E Crouch, Mr D M Cundy, Mr M P Deacon, Mr M J Duffy, Mr R C Elsworth, Mr E Evans, Mr A M Fedorec, Dr K A Fenech, Mr J G Field, Dr G W Foster, Mr T Gaffney, Dr G A Georgiou, Dr D R Green, Mr R L Green, Prof A Hibbert, Mr J Hodges, Dr N Jefferies, Dr M J Jeger, Dr T V Jennings, Dr D C Jiles, Prof S L Kalla, Prof C M Khalique, Prof M A Koenders, Dr P J Krause, Mr C J Lawrence, Prof P J G Lisboa, Dr P D Loach, Dr R J Loughnane, Dr D J Marsay, Mr R C McKenzie, Mr J McMahon, Dr R V N Melnik, Prof M J Newby, Mr J R Nicholson, Prof A T Parsons, Dr N B Pickard, Prof A Prasad, Mr R J Price, Mr A J Pritchard, Dr I K Proudler, Mr C D Raine, Dr D B Reid, Dr G J Rodgers, Dr R A Sisson, Dr D K Smith, Dr A Stevens, Dr E T Sweeney, Prof L N Trefethen, Prof J T Xing.

PERSONAL COLUMN

We didn't bring anything into this world, and we won't take anything with us when we leave. So we should be satisfied just to have food and clothes. 1 Timothy 6:7-8 (CEV).

BIRTHS

BROWN - On Saturday 27th February at North Hampshire Hospital to John and Julia, a wonderful son, Oliver Michael David, 8lbs 3ozs, a brother for Sam.

BURCH - On 18th February 1999, in Cambridge to Rachel (née Colet) and Jonathan, a daughter, Imogen Elizabeth, a sister for Sebastian.

BYRNES - On March 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Sally and John, a daughter, Erin Elizabeth, thank you God!

CARTER - On March 4th to Louise (née Ewart) and Nick, a son, Thomas Hugo Archie.

COOPER - On February 22nd to Andrea and Keir, a gentle little person, Milo David Louis, a brother for Blaise.

DUNNILL - On 16th February 1999, to Jeremy and Jane, a son, Archie Edward.

FINLAY - On March 4th at The Portland Hospital, to Emily (née Clayson) and Rodger, a son, Hugh, a much loved early arrival.

HARRIS - On March 4th at The Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, to Kate (née Martin) and James, a son, Edward George James.

JUCKES - On March 1st, to Cheryl (née Wilson) and Kit, a son, Dominic Hector David, a brother for Felicity.

LAUDER-FROST - On March 8th 1999 in Edinburgh, to Sarah-Jane (née Gladstone) and Gregory, a daughter, Clarissa Ina.

MALIN - Sarah (née Champion) and Richard are proud and happy to announce the arrival of their son James Richard Luigi on 6th March 1999.

MARR-JOHNSON - On 7th March, to Annie (née McEuen) and Prosper a daughter, Molly Ebba.

MORLEY - On March 3rd at The Portland Hospital, to Jennifer (née Marsden) and Robert, a son, Jonathan Stephen.

PHILLIPPS - On March 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Sarah and Mark, a son, a brother for Hunter.

RHIND - On March 5th, to Caroline (née Perkins) and Rory, a daughter, Olivia Alice Caitlin, a sister for Marcus and Giles.

REDHEAD - Caroline and Peter Redhead are pleased to announce the safe delivery of Alex's sister, Miss Megan Jade Bocking Redhead who arrived at 9.25 am on 27th February 1999 weighing 4.1kg. Many thanks to Dr. Nithiwat and the staff at The Samitivej Hospital in Bangkok, Thailand.

SINDALL - On 8th March to Andrew and Elizabeth, a beautiful daughter, Phoebe Katherine Eliza, a sister to Thomas, Harriet and Patrick.

SPICKERNELL - On March 4th, to Lady Rachel (née Fitzmaurice) and James, a daughter, Olivia, a sister for Ben and Freddie.

TRAFFORD - On March 1st, to Brigitte (née Howe) and Mark, a son Luc Anthony and a daughter Katherine Elizabeth, a brother and sister for Jessica.

VAN DE SANDT - On March 6th at The Portland Hospital, to Laura (Sanmartin) and Marco, a son, Nicolas Constantin Udolpho.

WILDS - On Friday 5th March, to Tania (née Germon) and Mark, a beautiful daughter, Catriona Zoe.

DEATHS

BRIDGER - Dr William Edward Wilfred, died peacefully at his home in Romsey, Hampshire on 8th March 1999. Formerly of Wells, Somerset. Dearly loved by all his family. Enquiries to A.H. Cheater, Funeral Directors, Romsey. Tel: 01794 513393.

BRITTEN - Margaret Irene 1912-1999. Passed away after a short illness on 1st March. Born in South Africa, she lived in Kensington, worked at The Royal Free Hospital and dedicated her life to haemophiliacs. She is survived by her grandchildren Richard and Rebecca. A service for her immediate family will be held in the U.S.A. Please send any donations in her honour to The Haemophilia Society, Chesterfield House, 385 Euston Road, London NW1 3AU.

BROXBOURNE - Dorothy, wife of the late Lord Broxbourne (formerly Derek Walker-Smith), mother of Jonah, Deborah and Berenice, died on 8th March, aged 92. Funeral at Eastbourne Crematorium on Monday 15th March at 3.15pm. All friends welcome. Family flowers only please.

COULTER - Margaret F (Peggy) on 5th March 1999, peacefully after a long illness courageously and cheerfully borne, beloved wife of the late Jack (John, formerly of C.V. and N.B. & M.), dear mother of Vicki and Fiona, adored and adoring grandmother. A funeral service will be held at 1.50pm on Friday 12th March at Warriston Crematorium Cloister, "Edinburgh". Family flowers only, but donations, if desired, welcomed by Alzheimers Society.

CRICHTON-STUART - Sheila Mary on Thursday 4th March 1999. Widow of Patrick, beloved mother of Caroline and Jamie and devoted grandmother of Katie, Freddie and Rory. Funeral Service on Monday, 15th March, 11.30am, at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, SW1. Family flowers only. Donations, if wished, to R.N.L.I. Bembridge Branch, c/o Weaver Bros Ltd., Bembridge, I.W., 01983 872598. Memorial Service in Bembridge to be announced.

DABER - (John Stewart) Solicitor. Peacefully on March 3th 1999 in a nursing home and formerly of Bowdon. Stewart, aged 79 years, loving husband of the late Bea, much loved dad of Nick and Sue, father-in-law of Sue Elizabeth and Grandpa of Edward. Service and committal will be held at Altrincham Crematorium on Wednesday March 17th at 3.30pm. Family flowers only, donations if desired for the Leukaemia Research Fund, may be sent to Arthur Gresty, MBIE, MBIFD, Greystones, 305 Manchester Road, Altrincham, WA14 5PH. Tel: 0161 973 1515.

DE NORMANVILLE - Peter peacefully on 7th March after a long illness. A film maker of distinction and beloved husband to Sarah, dearly loved father of Siri and Pierrette, and adored grandfather. An exceptional man who will truly be missed. Funeral at 11 am Sunday 14th March at Golders Green Crematorium. Family flowers only, please, but if you wish, donations to cancer research or The Marie Curie Clinic, Lyndhurst Gardens, NW3.

DONALD - Mary Catherine (Myra). Widow of David, lately of Downs House, Plumpton, Sussex, died peacefully at a nursing home in Bexhill on 26th February 1999. A quiet cremation was held on 4th March at Eastbourne.

DU PORT - Nora Laird on 8th March 1999 very peacefully at home.

DUNMORE - Stephen Robert died 4th March 1999. Beloved son of Harold and Gladys, father of Holly and partner of Felicity. Funeral Service at All Saints Church, 105 New Cross Road, London SE14 at 12 noon Friday 12th March. Family flowers only but donations to the Leukaemia Research Fund c/o Francis Chappell, 468 Bromley Road, Downham, Kent BR1 4PP.

ELLIOTT - Kathleen (Kay) - died at home on Monday 1st March. Private cremation. A Service of Thanksgiving will be held at Holy Trinity Church, Greys Hill, Henley-on-Thames on Wednesday 17th March at 11.00am. She will be sadly missed by her family and friends. All enquiries to Tomalin & Son Tel 01491 573370.

GARRETT - Sheila Agnes Graham S.R.N. Peacefully on March 5th 1999, aged 80. Cared for wonderfully by The Sisters and Staff at St Raphaels Nursing Home, Danehill. Much loved by her sister Ailsa and all her family and friends. Formerly Chief Nursing Officer of St Thomas' Hospital from 1970 until 1976. Funeral at St John's Church, Crowborough on Monday, March 15th at 1.15 pm followed by private cremation. No flowers please, but donations if desired for The Benevolent Fund of St Thomas' Hospital c/o Paul Bysouth Funeral Services, Crowborough. Tel: (01892) 655000.

GERARD-PATEY - At home in Hampshire on February 23rd, Anne (Muriel) née Prentice, formerly of Nottingham, widow of Robert Gerard-Patey and dearest mother, grandmother and great grandmother. The funeral service took place in Bournemouth on March 9th.

GRAHAM - Robert John, BD, Dip: Ad: Ed. Canon Emeritus of York. Synodal Secretary of the Convocation of York 1950-1985. Rural Dean of Howden 1959-1979. Died peacefully in the Royal Surrey County Hospital Guildford March 5th 1999. Dearly loved Father of Christine and Kathryn, in law of Graham, Gramps of Stuart and Jonathan, loving husband of the late Marjorie Graham JP. A requiem mass will be held in the chapel at Manormead, Hindhead Surrey at 2.15 pm on Monday March 15th 1999. Family flowers only by request, donations in lieu to Manormead may be sent c/o C.M. Luff, 84 Lion Lane, Haslemere GU27 1JH.

HARRISSON - Freda (née Morris) on 7th March in Hospital. Adored mother of Avril and Colin, loving Grandmother of Charles, Anna, Anthony and Camilla. Great Grandmother of Georgia, Sebastian, Lila and Kit. Step Grandmother of David, Sophie and Camilla. Funeral Service at Putney Vale Crematorium on 17th March at 3.00pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to King Edward VII's Hospital for Officers (0171 467 3920).

HORSFORD - Maxwell Henry. Peacefully at home on March 4th. Max, dearly beloved husband of Peggy, father of Anthony and Sarah, Lynda and Robert, Frank and Hilary and grandpa of Christopher, Andrew and Julietta, Rebecca, Nicola and Elizabeth. Funeral Service at St Peters Church Limpsfield on Thursday 11th March at 12 noon. Flowers and enquiries to Ebbutts Funeral Service (tel: 01883 713767).

HUTCHEON - On March 4th 1999, unexpectedly at home, Aileen Constance (Pete), wife of the late Sir Alexander Hutcheon and mother of Maxwell. Funeral service at Mortlake Crematorium at 10.30am on Friday March 12th. Enquiries to Chelsea Funeral Directors - 0171 385 0866.

JAMES - Alsina on Monday 8th March, much loved widow of Francis ("Jimmy") James and mother of David. She died on her 89th birthday, lovingly cared for in the Ranyard Home, Blackheath. The funeral will take place at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Handen Road, Lee SE12 at 11 am on Monday 15th March followed by a private cremation at Lewisham Crematorium. All friends welcome at the church. Flowers if wished, to Francis Chappell, 4 Lee High Road, Lewisham SE13 5LQ. 0181 852 2936.

JONES - Florence Elizabeth (née Cheesman) peacefully at home on Saturday 6th March 1999 aged 76. Beloved wife of Reginald, mother of Daphne, mother-in-law of Alan, grandmother of Dawn and Lisa. Cremation Tuesday 16th March Amersham Crematorium at 2 pm.

KENRICK - Elizabeth Mitchell (Betty) (née Bellair) on March 7th peacefully at home, aged 88. Widow of Peter Kenrick and a proud mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral Service at St John the Baptist, Wolverley on Wednesday 17th March at 11.30 am. No flowers; donations to the British Red Cross c/o Edwin Harris, 1 Crane Street, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY11 6XT.

LOCH - Doreen Betty, Lady Loch, at Tregertha Court, Looe, Cornwall, on 8th March 1999. Mother of Jill (deceased), grandmother of David Fanning (NZ). Funeral 2 pm Monday 15th March at Lansallos, near Polperro. Enquiries to H. Hocking & Sons, (01503) 262812.

LYNCH - Martin aged 71 years on 8th March peacefully at home in Penzance, beloved husband of Janet and a dearly loved father of Alice. Funeral Service on Friday 12th March at 3 pm. Donations for the Howard League and enquiries to David Walker Funeral Director, Penzance, (01736-362423).

MACHIN - Arnold Machin OBE RA aged 87 on March 9th. Private funeral. Memorial Service in London at a future date.

MAIDEN - Albert Rowland, Honorary Townsman of Wimborne Minster, Dorset, died peacefully on March 7th 1999 in Hindhead at the age of 91. Beloved husband of Joyce, loving father of Alan and Janie, grandfather and great-grandfather. He will be greatly missed by all his family, friends and former students. Funeral service on Saturday 13th March at Guildford Crematorium at 11.30 am. Enquiries G.M. Luff Funeral Directors 01428-643534.

MAUNSELL - Kate (née Saltmarsh) died peacefully on March 9th aged 88. Devoted wife of the late Tony Maunsell and much loved mother of Kit and Micky, grandmother of Rebecca, Philip, Samantha, Venetia, Chloe and Skye. Funeral on Monday 15th March at the Parish Church of St Deinst, Llangarron, at 11.00am. Family flowers only but donations if desired to The Treasurer, St Deinst Parish Church, Llangarron, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire.

McADAM - Sir Ian William James. Ian died peacefully at home on March 4th aged 82 after a long illness borne with dignity, fortitude and humour. Dearly beloved husband of Pam, brother of Ron and father of Keith, Elspeth and Roslyn and stepfather of John and Richard. His 12 grandchildren: Karen, Ruth, Cheryl, Michael, James, Claire, Ian, Oliver, Luke, Maria Joanna, Camilla and Julian also adored him. Service at 2pm Friday March 12th at St Margaret's Northam; family flowers only. Donations in his memory to Little Bridge House Childrens Hospice South West. A Memorial will be held in the summer.

MOORE - Dorothy Mary (née Alcock), aged 94 years. Wife of the late Henry Moore, mother of Sybil and Henry. Service of Thanksgiving on Monday 15th March 1999 at 11.00am at St Paul's Church, Tupsley, Hereford. No flowers please, but donations instead to SSNAP (Support for the Sick Newborn and their Parents, Charity number 285231), John Radcliffe Hospital, Womens Centre, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9DU.

MOORE - On 3rd March 1999, at his home at Braknabool, Scalloway, Shetland, John William (Jack), BEM, Knight First Class of the Order of St Olav, aged 99 years. Dearly loved husband of Margaret and father of Eileen, Bill and the late John, father-in-law of Jon and grandfather of Jackie and Glenn. Interment took place on 6th March at Tingwall, Shetland.

PEAL - Ronald Edmund Fraser peacefully on March 8th after a long fight against illness. Very greatly loved husband, father and grandfather. Service of Thanksgiving for family and friends at St Luke's Church, Eardley Road, Sevenoaks on Tuesday 16th March at 2.30pm. No flowers by request but donations if desired to British Ornithologists' Club c/o Welham Jones, 156 London Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1DJ. (01732 742400).

PRITCHARD - Maud Pritchard, greatly loved and admired by her family and many friends, passed away peacefully on 7th March aged 88 years. Funeral Service at St Paul's Church, Letchworth on Tuesday 16th March at 12.30 pm. All enquiries to E.H. Crouch, 22A Hitchin Street, Baldock, tel: (01462) 892868.

RHODES - Philip John died bravely and peacefully on 8th March 1999 at Parkside Hospital, Wimbledon, aged 61. Darling husband of Madeleine, much adored father of Jane and Judith (not forgetting Jens and Eddie) and proud grandpa of Janni and Julia. Funeral at St Mary's Church, Wimbledon on Tuesday 16th March 1999 at 12 noon. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Cancer Research Campaign c/o Ashtons Funeral Service, 140 Alexandra Road, SW19 7JY.

SIMAIKA - Manora Joy peacefully at home on March 7th. Beautiful and adored mother of Nikolas, Tania and Kira and much loved wife of the late Victor. Memorial service to be held at All Saints, Marlow on Saturday 13th March at 3 pm following a private cremation. No flowers please, but any donations to The Parkinsons Society, c/o E. Taylor & Son, 21 Corbett Road, Carterton, Oxon. OX18 3LG.

VERNON - On 6th March 1999, peacefully in St Wilfrids Hospice, Eastbourne, after a brief illness, May (Lillian Elizabeth). She was a faithful daughter, a loyal friend and a beloved aunt. Funeral Service at Wish Hill Methodist Church, Willingdon, on Friday 19th March at 12 noon, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only, but if desired donations for St Wilfrids Hospice may be sent to Haine & Son Ltd., 19 South Street, Eastbourne.

WALFORD - Juan George Walford de Borbón, Duque de Marchena, aged 86 years on March 6th, peacefully at home. Funeral at Worth Abbey, Paddockhurst Road, Turners Hill, Crawley, West Sussex on Friday 12th March at 11.00am, followed by burial at Balcombe Parish Church.

WHELDON - John, husband of Ursula and father of Michael and Juliet, on March 8th 1999 aged 87. Cremation private, no flowers.

WHITELAW - At Queen Margaret Hospital, Dunfermline on Monday 8th March 1999, Robert Whitelaw M.D., F.R.C.O.G., D.L. aged 85 years, a beloved husband, father and grandfather. Funeral Service on Saturday 13th March in Holy Trinity Church, East Port, Dunfermline at 10.00am and thereafter to Dunfermline Crematorium at 11.00am to which all friends are invited. Family flowers only please.

WILLANS - James Lindsay aged 86. Died peacefully on 7th March at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford after a short illness. Much loved father of Lindsay, Sarah and Jolyon and stepfather of Mary, Richard and Stephen Castle, grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral at Oxford Crematorium 3 pm Wednesday 17th March. Family flowers only but donations for the John Radcliffe Hospital Charitable Fund may be sent to Reeves & Pain, Funeral Directors, 288 Abingdon Road, Oxford OX1 4TE. A Thanksgiving Service will be held at Rugby School at 2.30 pm on 24th April.

WILLIAMSON - Joyce Margaret (née Salmond) died suddenly but peacefully at home in Norwich on March 4th 1999 aged 87 years. Devoted wife of the late H.S. Williamson, beloved mother of Juliet and Sara. The funeral service will take place on Tuesday March 16th at Christchurch, Eaton, Norwich at 2 pm and thereafter a private cremation at St Faiths Crematorium. Family flowers only please. For any enquiries please contact Gordon Barber Funeral Home on Norwich (01603) 484308.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

ALDRIDGE - Mark. Funeral Service Worcester Cathedral Monday 15th March, 12.30, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only; donations if desired to Worcester Cathedral Restoration Fund.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

GLENDEVON - A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Lady Glendevon will be held at Chelsea Old Church, Old Church Street on Tuesday 23rd March at 11am.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

BOWLER - Alan B.Sc. We miss you Daddy. Penelope.

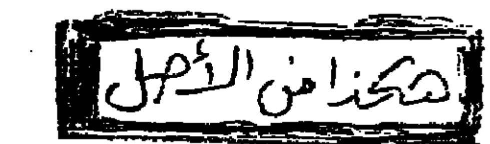
COOKE - Emma. Remembering our sister tragically killed in a car accident 25 years ago today, aged 11. Her brothers Robert, Philip and Tom.

MARRIAGES

PHILLIPPS:JENKINS - Bryce Andrew, second son of Mr and Mrs Richard Phillipps of Wokingham and Janet Anne, daughter of Mr and Mrs Owen Jenkins of Maidenhead, Berkshire, were married on February 26th at Barbados, W.I.

BIRTHDAYS

BIANCHI - Thomas, happy 1st birthday, lots of love Mummy, Daddy and family.



OBITUARIES

DUNCAN DEWDNEY

Duncan Dewdney, CBE, oil industry executive, died on February 11 aged 87. He was born on October 22, 1911.

DUNCAN DEWDNEY had a long career in the oil industry, working both in research and in industrial relations.

Educated at Bromsgrove School and Birmingham University, Duncan Alexander Cox Dewdney joined British Petroleum in 1932. He then worked for an organisation set up by Standard Oil to assist its for-



eign affiliates, such as Anglo-American Oil in Britain. This work took him to Germany, and also gave him experience of the aviation industry.

He was thus highly qualified to become civilian oil adviser to Bomber Command. In 1939 he was commissioned into the RAF as a wing commander, advising the Air Ministry on the effects of bomb damage, and analysing the impact of the bombing campaign on the German war effort.

After the war he worked for six years as research manager at Esso Development in Abingdon. In 1951 he moved to Esso Petroleum (as the Anglo-American Oil Company had become) as assistant manager at the newly expanded Fawley Refinery. In 1957 he joined the Esso board, where he now became the leader of the team which developed the "Fawley Blue Book", widely regarded as perhaps the most significant development in British productivity bargaining this century.

Esso was at the time developing Irish Refining as a joint venture with Shell, BP and Texaco, to build a refinery to supply the Irish Republic. Dewdney was chairman of the joint company from 1958 to 1965.

From 1963 to 1967 he was the managing director at Esso responsible for refining and corporate planning, and he was seconded to the National Board of Prices and Incomes from 1965 to 1967. One of his assignments was to improve the productivity of the printing industry. His conclusion was that no progress would be made unless a proprietor was prepared to have a massive confrontation with the unions, including plant shutdowns, but at that time no one had the courage.

In 1968 he was appointed deputy chairman of Esso, but he shortly afterwards resigned to become an executive director of RTZ. He had responsibility for the RTZ interest in the Channel Tunnel and then for a projected aluminium smelter in Anglesey. The economics of both defeated him, however, and he retired in 1972.

In retirement he was a director of the Coverdale Organisation and deputy chairman of the Manpower Services Commission from 1974 to 1977.

Duncan Dewdney was appointed CBE in 1968. His wife Ann, whom he married in 1935, predeceased him in 1993. He is survived by their two daughters.

ARNOLD MACHIN

Arnold Machin, OBE, RA, sculptor, died yesterday aged 87. He was born on September 30, 1911.

Arnold Machin is certain of an enduring if anonymous fame: millions of people in Britain and around the world know his work, though few know his name. Every coin of Queen Elizabeth II's reign minted from 1964 to 1985 carried his effigy of the Queen, and every one of the billions of British definitive stamps issued since 1967 has carried another, different, effigy by Machin. But these represent just one aspect of a busy life.

Arnold Machin was born at Trent Vale, Stoke-on-Trent, of a family of potters. He was educated locally, and when he left school joined the firm of Minton as a figure painter on china. But he also studied part-time at Stoke School of Art, and a teacher who worked for Minton and later Wedgwood introduced him to the delights of modelling in terracotta. This led to a job with the Crown Derby porcelain works. From there, a scholarship took him to Derby School of Art in 1934, and his talent then secured him a place at the Royal College of Art in London, where he studied from 1937 to 1940, working mostly in terracotta sculpture under Professor Richard Garbe.



Machin in 1967 with his relief portrait of the Queen, which is still in use on definitive stamps after more than 30 years

Machin won a Silver Medal and a Travelling Scholarship for Sculpture from the Royal College in 1940, but since it was wartime he was unable to take advantage of this. However, early success came to him that year: a terracotta of a mother and child was accepted for the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition; and Machin was taken on by Wedgwood as an adviser on figure work. In 1941, back in the Potteries, he caused quite a stir with 15 terracotta figures at the exhibition in Hanley of the Society of Staffordshire Artists.

Throughout his life Machin was concerned with the themes of the Annunciation, with its figures of Angel and Virgin, and Spring or Primavera. In 1944 the Tate Gallery bought two of his works through the Knapping Fund, an Annunciation group and a St John the Baptist. A further acquisition followed in 1947, when the Chantrey Bequest donated to the Tate an almost lifesized figure of Spring, exhibited that year at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition.

Machin was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in that year, and became a full Academician in 1956. He taught at the Royal College of Art from 1951 to 1958, and was then Master of Sculpture at the Royal Academy Schools from 1958 to 1967, where he became the mentor of many young sculptors.

In 1964 Machin was selected to sculpt a new effigy of the Queen for the new British coinage, to supersede that by Mary Gillick. Apart from the choice of designer in such cases, there are other decisions to be made, such as whether to portray a crown, tiara, diadem or laurel wreath on the hair, and whether it should be a bust or merely the head of the Sovereign. The final choice is made by the Queen.

Machin's effigy appeared on the new decimal coinage introduced in 1968, and full decimalisation followed in 1971. This effigy remained on the coinage until superseded by Raphael Maklouf's in 1985, which was used until 1997.

The royal effigy on postage stamps does not inevitably follow that of the coinage or change at the same time. However, after five artists had been asked to submit designs for the new for stamps in 1967, Machin, who took his inspiration from the Penny Black, was chosen again. He produced another portrait in relief sculpture, to give a striking cameo effect. Lighting and shadowing such a sculpture to maximise the effect of character in a photograph is difficult; the ideal lighting was eventually achieved in this case outside in a car park on a foggy day.

The Postmaster General, Edward Short, described the Machin design as "one of the greatest stamps of all time", and the Queen saw no need to change the royal image on the stamps when the effigy on the coinage was changed in 1985.

Machin was also involved in various other commissions, principally for Wedgwood, for whom he designed a set of ceramic chessmen and produced many portaits of the Royal Family.

As a sculptor married to a flower painter, he was naturally drawn to garden design, which became one of his major hobbies, and Machin involved himself in a substantial undertaking at his home near Eccleshall, Staffordshire, where he created a large garden of paths and perspectives, loggias and grottos, waterfalls and fountains, interspersed with urns, ornaments and sculpture, and rich with roses.

In 1997 he was prominent among the Academicians who protested at the *Sensation* exhibition, which included a portrait of the murderer Myra Hindley, made with children's handprints. Machin described the show as pornographic rubbish.

He was appointed OBE in 1965.

Arnold Machin married Patricia Newton, the flower painter, in 1949. She survives him, along with a son.

GLENN SEABORG

Glenn Seaborg, American nuclear scientist and Nobel laureate, died in Lafayette, California, on February 25 aged 86. He was born on April 12, 1912.

OF ALL the radioactive elements synthesised by Glenn Seaborg and his team at Berkeley, California, the most important in terms of its impact on history was the fissile isotope of plutonium, plutonium 239, created in 1941. Unlike uranium (atomic number 92), which is the most abundant radioactive element in the Earth's crust, plutonium (94) scarcely occurs in nature, and useful amounts can be obtained only by setting up reactions with uranium.

Seaborg and his co-workers had already, in 1940, synthesised plutonium 238 by bombarding uranium with deuterons in the Berkeley cyclotron. They created plutonium 239 in the following year by neutron bombardment of uranium 238. The element was to make its devastating debut as a weapon of war in the second of the nuclear bombs used against Japan in 1945. "Fat Man", dropped on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945, three days after the devastation of Hiroshima by the uranium weapon "Little Boy", was a plutonium bomb. Although the topography of the city saved it from the almost total destruction that befell Hiroshima, more than 73,000 of its population of 212,000 were killed and an equal number were injured.

Of his reaction to his work, Seaborg said recently: "I was a 28-year-old kid and I didn't stop to think about it. I didn't think 'My God, we've changed the world.'" However, Seaborg was disturbed enough about his creation — as the war in Europe ended while that in the Far East continued, promising heavy American casualties — to sign a report produced by a number of his Manhattan Project colleagues, begging President Truman to demonstrate nuclear weapons to Japanese scientists before using them on the populace.

In later life Seaborg worked to extend the peaceful use of atomic energy, as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) from 1961 to 1971. He also championed Operation Ploughshare, the notion of usingf atomic explosions for large-scale excavation. But this came under fire from environmentalists in the 1970s, when it was realised that there would be massive contamination of areas contiguous to nuclear blasting. Seaborg was also criticised for the AEC's handling of nuclear waste, and when it was discovered that sand being used as free landfill by property developers was radioactive.

Plutonium was the second of the transuranic elements (those that lie higher than uranium in the periodic table) to be "discovered". No 93, neptunium, was synthesised in 1940 by Edwin McMillan, who shared with Seaborg the 1951 Nobel Prize for Chemistry.

Glenn Theodore Seaborg was born in Ishpeming, Michigan, of Swedish immigrant parents. He grew up retaining his Swedish culture; indeed, when he went to Stockholm to receive his Nobel Prize he began his address in Swedish.

When he was ten his family moved to California where, after starting literary studies at UCLA, he switched to chemistry at Berkeley. There he worked with such founding fathers of nuclear physics as J. Robert Oppenheimer, and when war came to the US in 1941 he was seconded to the Manhattan Project to build the atomic bomb, as a section chief at Chicago University.

After the war he returned to Berkeley, where he continued his work on transuranic elements. After plutonium, among those he identified were americium (95), berkelium (97), einsteinium (99), fermium (100) and nobelium (102). And in 1997 Seaborg achieved what neither Einstein nor Fermi had managed when element 106 was named seaborgium. It was the first time a living scientist had had an element named after him.

Glenn Seaborg is survived by his wife, Helen, whom he married in 1942, and by three sons and two daughters.



Seaborg in his laboratory at Berkeley, California, in 1941

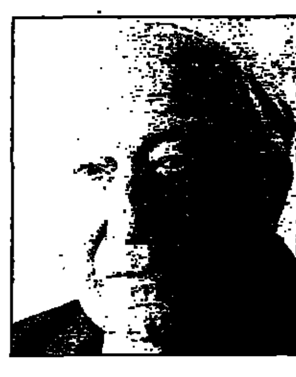
CLIFFORD HAIGH

Clifford Haigh, a former Chief Home Sub-editor of *The Times* and later Editor of *The Friend*, died on February 7 aged 93. He was born on February 5, 1906.

BEHIND the bylines in newspaper reports and articles sit anonymous groups of sub-editors, men and women who correct errors, check facts, make cuts where necessary and compose headlines, all under the tyranny of the clock. When Clifford Haigh joined *The Times* in January 1947 as a home news sub-editor, an additional constraint was newsprint rationing, which limited pagination and so demanded compression. His judgment, skill and hard work led to a deserved promotion as head of the department in 1952.

A native of Yorkshire, from where many young journalists gravitated to London, Haigh left school at 14 for an office boy's job on the *Bradford Observer*. (Inkstains on his mother's table-top still mark his editorship of the school magazine.) Later, his fluent shorthand notes, flowing from a long, lean hand pivoting on his little finger, recorded the usual round of council meetings, court cases and social events upon which journalistic experience is founded; but he preferred sub-editing.

He moved to *The Birmingham Post* in 1938, and from 1940 served inconspicuously in the Army during the war. Not long after his demob he



was accepted by *The Times*. It was a period of intense activity: the new welfare state, health, nationalisation, town and country planning and peacetime regeneration threw a heavy burden on press coverage. His promotion cost Haigh long hours at his desk and in the composing room, cramming far more than quarts into pint pots. He laboured tirelessly, sustained by a thick cheese sandwich and a couple of mugs of tea, from early afternoon into the small hours. His lean, stooped figure and steel-framed spectacles gave him the air of a librarian rather than an essential element in achieving accurate, balanced coverage of events.

In his scant leisure, he found time to write fourth leaders, court page articles, and pieces for *The Times Educational Supplement*. At the age of 90 he presented News International's archivist with the fruits of those years in a large collection of cuttings books, on permanent loan, all meticulously indexed, reflecting his moral, social, artistic and welfare interests.

These interests determined his move in 1961 to the Quaker paper *The Friend*. His first wife had died, his children had grown up, and, as he observed in his faintly sardonic way at a farewell gathering at *The Times*, he felt he was being overpaid. It was perhaps equally true that he feared advancement to the strenuous duties of night editing. He went to *The Friend* as assistant editor on less money, expecting a nice quiet last ten years of working life. But the Editor, Bernard Canter, was unwell, and after two hard years Haigh, who had felt that an experienced Quaker was needed, was persuaded to succeed him.

He proved thoroughly dependable, scrutinising every line, including the advertisements, reporting, book reviewing and contributing "Mainly Personal" commentaries, some of which were written in the train en route to the printers.

In his concern for the homeless, Haigh joined several others to form the Shepherds Bush Housing Association, a pioneer in community housing. One of its properties was later named Clifford Haigh House.

On his retirement to Folkestone with his second wife in 1974 he worked for the Citizens Advice Bureau and was soon recruited to take charge. He was also treasurer of the local Abbeyfield Housing Association for many years, during which time a second home for the elderly was opened.

He leaves his widow and the son and daughter of his first marriage.

ON THIS DAY

March 10, 1956

Archbishop Makarios (1913-77) was deported to the Seychelles. Four years later, Cyprus, a British colony since 1925, became an independent republic with the Archbishop as its first President.

ARCHBISHOP DEPORTED

NICOSIA, March 9

Archbishop Makarios was deported today to an unknown destination. Three others were deported with him. An official statement issued here today says:

"Today the Governor, Field-Marshal Sir John Harding, ordered the deportation of Archbishop Makarios under Regulation VII of the Emergency Powers (Public Safety and Order) Regulations. The Archbishop has already left the island under escort for a destination which will be announced later.

"The Governor entered into discussions on the political and constitutional future of the island with Archbishop Makarios as being the traditional leader of the Greek Cypriot community. In embarking on these discussions the Governor was aware that there were grounds for believing that the Archbishop was personally implicated in the terrorism. Nevertheless, the Governor decided to negotiate with him, in the hope that he might be induced to denounce violence and to advise his fellow-countrymen to follow his lead and in the belief that this might be the quickest and least painful way of getting the people of Cyprus back on to the path of democracy and of restoring to them freedom to think and speak for themselves.

"Over the past five months, while the discussions have proceeded, further evidence, both direct and circumstantial, has accumulated to show the extent to which the Archbishop has been personally implicated in the activities of Eoka [the underground group fighting for independence from Britain and union with Greece]. Nevertheless the Governor has pursued these discussions to the furthest possible limit of conciliation and concession in the hope that the Archbishop might be induced to denounce violence, and so to open the door to co-operation and orderly constitutional progress.

"This hope has now been disappointed by the Archbishop's refusal to abandon the weapons of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of his political aims. The matters over which he has broken off the discussion cannot possibly be held to justify or excuse the continued resort to violent and extreme methods which are still rife in the island and which have culminated in a dastardly attempt to wreck an aircraft carrying British servicemen and their families. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the Archbishop is now so far committed to the use of violence for political ends that he either cannot or will not abandon it.

"The Governor has therefore reluctantly concluded that the Archbishop now personally constitutes a major obstacle to a return to peaceful conditions, and that his influence must therefore be removed from the island in the interest of promoting peace, order, and good government."

The Archbishop was arrested when he arrived at the civil airport of Nicosia to board an airliner for Athens.

He took his arrest quietly and chatted with his companions as he boarded an RAF Hastings aircraft under the escort of British troops . . .

BUDGET

Showman Brown's 22p tax shock

■ Gordon Brown pulled a £4 billion tax surprise out of the hat yesterday with a cut in the basic rate of income tax to 22p next year and the immediate introduction of the long-promised 10p starting rate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer delighted Labour MPs with a spend-and-tax-cut package with all the hallmarks of a pre-election Budget..............................Pages 1, 9-20

Relief for elderly

Ten million pensioners will benefit from a five-fold increase in the winter fuel payment to £100 per household from this year, as part of a £3 billion package of measures aimed at relieving poverty among the elderly...........Page 10

Drop in small car tax

Drivers of the smallest cars were given a £55 reduction in their car tax as Mr Brown called for wider use of vehicles which caused less pollution. Owners of cars with engine sizes below 1100cc will pay £100 a year from June.....Page 12

Miras abolished

The abolition of mortgage interest relief at source ends one of middle England's most cherished perks, but estate agents said it would have little effect on the health of the property market.........Page 11

Computer revolution

Cyber cafes in every region of Britain will offer the on-line equivalent of the public library, while tax breaks aim to encourage up to one million adults to hone their keyboard skills.................Page 13

Cigarettes up 17.5p

The day of the 20 pence cigarette moved nearer last night. City analysts saw the 17.5p immediate increase in the price of 20 cigarettes as a classic example of taxation by stealth..............................Page 11

Hague hits 'stealth'

William Hague said Gordon Brown was a "pickpocket Chancellor" who was raising taxes by stealth. The Tory leader accused Labour of punishing savers and paralysing business.........Page 18

NEWS

Prince strengthens ties with Argentina

■ The Prince of Wales launched into one of his most delicate diplomatic missions when he arrived in Buenos Aires for a three-day visit to Argentina. At a wreath-laying ceremony at the statue of José de San Martín, the national hero, the Prince said: "We are delighted by the steady rehabilitation of the close relationship which can and should exist between us".....Page 2

Death pact 'invented'

A one-time girlfriend of the Oasis singer Liam Gallagher was strangled by her possessive lover, a former soldier in the Israeli army, who tried to hide the crime by inventing a suicide pact, the Old Bailey was told..................Page 3

Nurses back the pill

School nurses should be authorised to hand out morning-after contraceptive pills and give family planning advice to all children in secondary schools, including under-16s, the Royal College of Nursing agreed.................Page 6

Officer suspended

The Chief Constable of Sussex Police was suspended over a raid in which an unarmed suspect was shot. Paul Whitehouse, 53, was on holiday abroad when the decision was announced.................Page 4

Nuclear secrets row

A Chinese-American scientist working at the Los Alamos nuclear laboratory has been fired as one of the biggest espionage rows since the Cold War engulfed the Clinton Administration.....Page 8

Derwent flood danger

Hundreds of riverside householders are preparing for the highest flood levels this century. Red alerts were issued in villages near York as a surge flowed down the River Derwent............Page 5

French HIV case ends

Edmond Hervé, a former French Health Minister, has been let off with a "symbolic" censure after being found guilty of manslaughter in the HIV-contaminated blood scandal.....................Page 21

SIMON WALKER



Huge back-to-front cardigans hid many of the Africa-inspired designs in the Christian Dior collection unveiled in Paris. Report, page 3

BUSINESS

Sony jobs: Hundreds of jobs could be under threat in Wales after Sony Corporation said that it would cut 17,000 jobs — 10 per cent of its worldwide workforce.........Page 29

Tobacco sale: RJR Nabisco acted to thwart an expected boardroom coup by Carl Icahn by selling its international tobacco business for £5 billion and splitting its US tobacco and food interests..........Page 29

Coats row: Sir David Alliance, the founder of Coats Viyella and its chairman for the past decade, could face pressure from institutional investors to resign.....................Page 30

Markets: The FTSE 100 index rose 28.90 points to 6237.7. The pound rose 0.66 cents to $1.6149 and 0.24p against the euro to 76.43p. The sterling index rose to 102.5......Page 32

SPORT

Football: John Gregory, the Aston Villa manager, yesterday conceded for the first time that his stressed striker, Stan Collymore, is a "sick man", and is suffering clinical depression..............................Page 56

Boxing: Lennox Lewis is sceptical about whether Americans will give him his due if he beats Evander Holyfield, because their press has always been against him......Page 56

Cricket: Shockwaves were still reverberating around the Caribbean as the West Indies tried to come to terms with the worst disaster in their cricket history............Page 51

Simon Barnes: Television makes a boxing match look like an ill-choreographed saloon brawl in a bad Western; Formula One looks like Scalextric..............................Page 54

ARTS

Drip feed: The Tate Gallery's survey of the work of Jackson Pollock reveals the great American painter at his most ferocious and also his most vulnerable..................Page 41

Diamond geezer: The veteran singer Neil Diamond kicks off his sold-out shows at Wembley Arena with two-and-a-half hours of Diamond classics..............................Page 42

Outrageous fortune: Greenwich Theatre sees the culmination this weekend of a theatre project in which 19 amateur groups put their own spin on *Hamlet*..................Page 43

Euro-opera: In Monte Carlo, Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu, opera's golden couple, get a cheer even when they mess it up; and Bordeaux laps up Handel's *Giulio Cesare*......................................Page 44

FEATURES

Lost Jews: Members of the Lemba, a 70,000-strong tribe scattered across southern Africa, show genetic similarities with the inhabitants of a south Arabian region where a thriving Jewish population existed a millennium ago................Page 22

Nigel Hawkes: How scientists hope to deal with the bad-egg smell of hydrogen sulphide drifting out of the Parisian soil..........................Page 22

Bad dogs: "This," says New York's deputy parks commissioner, "is Mayor Giuliani's latest crackdown in action. Dogs are the vandals of the Nineties." Joanna Coles takes a walk in the park..................Page 23

FOCUS

Top dogs: From tomorrow, 110,000 dog lovers will travel to Crufts at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham...............Pages 46, 47

THE PAPERS

It is alarming to discover that lax security at the Los Alamos nuclear weapons laboratory in the mid-1980s may have let China steal secret designs for one of America's most compact nuclear warheads. It is also troubling to learn that the Clinton Administration did not react vigorously enough when it first heard of this possible breach of national security. Some Administration officials suggest that the White House may have minimized the case to insulate its goal of improving relations with Beijing.

The New York Times



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **FILMS**

Robin Williams, right, plays Patch Adams, a doctor who can't help but clown around

■ **BOOKS**

Erica Wagner listens to Andrew Morton tell Monica Lewinsky's story; Robert Nye on Peter Porter

RADIO & TV

Preview: How Britons exist in Holland's city of drugs. *Amsterdamage* (BBC2, 9pm) **Review:** Joe Joseph on ITV's new drama *Wonderful You* (ITV, 10pm)...................Pages 54, 55

OPINION

Essence of Brown

This Budget represents the essence of new Labour, delivering many of its traditional aims in a sophisticated way which puts its opponents in all sorts of trouble..............Page 25

Howard's end

The truly successful politician has to be popular, and right. Michael Howard should console himself that it is better if history judges one to be the latter rather than the former..................................Page 25

A new bridge

For the past five months the farmers of Olancho province have been unable to send their produce to the Honduran capital, cut off by the destruction of a vital bridge. Thanks to *Times* readers, their lifeline is to be restored..........................Page 25

COLUMNS

ANATOLE KALETSKY

This package, while it may initially be greeted as the cleverest of Mr Brown's Budgets, really *does* seem too good to be true..............Page 9

MATTHEW PARRIS

The Opposition leader's response, launched from a heap of crumpled papers, was feisty and sharp. Those doubting Hague's resilience should note the way he punched his way out of a corner ....Page 1

PETER RIDDELL

The only announcement missing from Mr Brown's speech was the date of the next election.....Page 24

SIMON JENKINS

There were actually three Budgets this year but they let you see only one...................................Page 24

ALAN COREN

God knows why they asked, I had never done a voiceover, but the Saatchis wanted a man to whom cats would listen.................Page 24

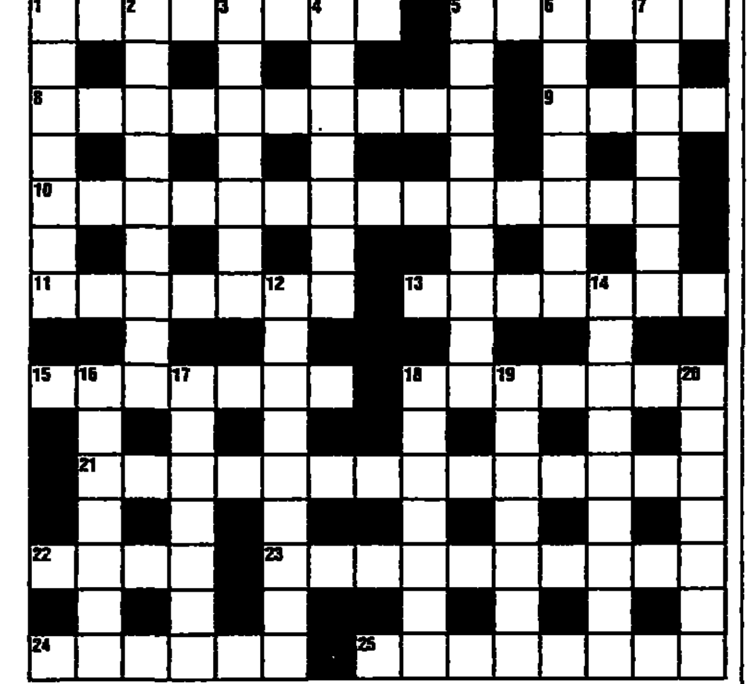
OBITUARIES

Arnold Machin, sculptor; **Glenn Seaborg**, scientist; **Duncan Dewdney**, oil executive........................Page 27

LETTERS

Kitchen table Conservatism; bananas: Pontius Pilate; older teachers; bombing Iraq; legal aid; Catholics and Red Nose Day..............Page 25

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,047



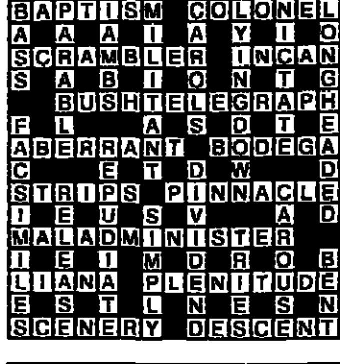
ACROSS

1 Athlete with golf shot of the highest quality (4-4).
5 Angelic being, extremely serene with harp, possibly (6).
8 Form of entertainment set in pub? (5,5).
9 Reserved outside page for newspaper material (4).
10 Suspect cat burglar of taking this cosmetic? (9,5).
11 Not getting on, apparently, in language lessons (7).
13 Tool that can get nails out (4,3).
15 Continuous management (7).
18 Shatters in quakes (7).
21 Increasing affluence due to getting a rise? (6,8).
22 Muse about painting worked on by Turner? (4).
23 Pain on rear that's produced by needle (10).
24 Offence said to strain rules for sentences (6).
25 Sort of microscope chosen by short chap (8).

DOWN

1 British countess on stage in foreign country (7).
2 Lack of interest in a French business (9).
3 Church has way, in general, to make organ stop (7).
4 Such characters are inclined to be emphatic (7).
5 Son with poor instructor is dull-witted type (9).
6 Fraudulent schemes providing sport for court (7).
7 Characters from Dickens and Austen meeting in afternoon once (3,4).
12 Protection for guard making second appearance to fight (6,3).
14 Prophet supporting king about proclamation (9).
16 As a rule, uranium's held by European member of NATO? (7).
17 Harbour here unsuitable for old vessels? (7).
18 One larks about stupidly without a breathing apparatus (7).
19 Hide his notice – the contents are so stupid (7).
20 Provide time to stop supply of drink (3,4).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,046



Times Two Crossword, page 56

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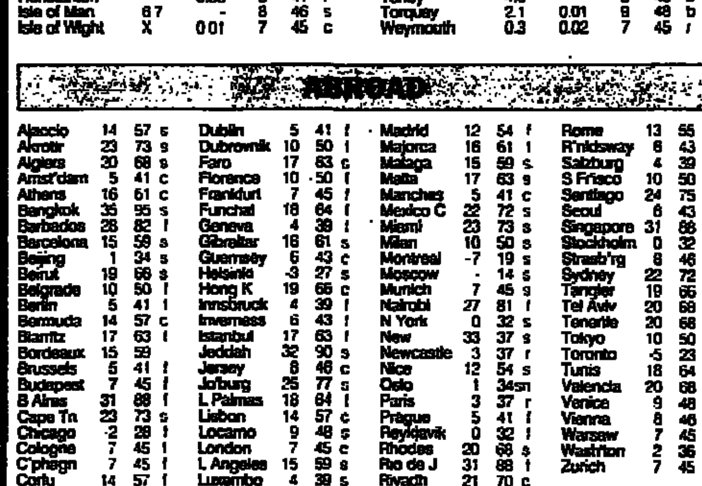
HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 6.27 am Sun sets: 5.55 pm

Moon sets: 10.28 am Moon rises: 1.28 am

Last quarter today

London 5.55 pm to 6.24 am
Bristol 6.06 pm to 6.35 am
Edinburgh 6.05 pm to 6.40 am
Manchester 6.03 pm to 6.35 am
Penzance 6.18 pm to 6.46 am



FORECAST

☐ **General:** rain will spread across southern England and possibly into southern Midlands and South Wales. Rain will be mainly light at first but will turn heavier, especially towards the Channel coast. Northern and eastern England mostly cloudy with some light rain, but it will brighten up in northwest and across North Wales. Northern and eastern Scotland will have bright spells and a few showers, some of them wintry, but western Scotland and Northern Ireland should stay dry with lengthy periods of sunshine.

Tonight southern England chilly and cloudy with rain edging inland from Channel, with heavy bursts over coasts and southern-most hills. East Anglia rather murky with rain threatening from south. Wales and the Midlands cold and largely dry with clear spells. Rain in Lancashire and Yorkshire with a risk of sleet or hill-snow. Scotland cold with showers of sleet and snow; cloudier in extreme north and east

☐ **London, SE England, Central S England, SW England, S Wales:** starting dry but increasingly cloudy with rain spreading northwards from south coast. Light to mod E wind Max 11C (52F).

☐ **E Anglia, Midlands:** mainly dry day with good sunny spells, but increasingly cloudy with rain spreading N during evening. Light/mod E wind. Max 10C (50F).

☐ **Channel Is:** a wet and dull day. Freshening SE wind. Max 10C (50F).

☐ **E, Cent N, NE England:** mainly cloudy and cool with a few bright spells. Light drizzly rain at times. Light E wind. Max 7C (45F).

☐ **N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** cloudy but mainly dry, the best of any bright spells this afternoon in sheltered western areas. Light easterly wind. Max 8C (46F).

☐ **N Ireland:** a dry day with frequent sunny spells. Light and variable wind. Max 8C (46F).

☐ **SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, NE Scotland, Argyll, NW Scotland:** frequent sunny spells, the best of these in sheltered western areas by the afternoon. Moderate southeasterly wind. Max temp 8C (46F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, Orkney, Shetland:** a mostly cloudy but dry day with showers possible along the coast. Moderate easterly wind. Max 7C (45F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** dry with sunny spells after early frost and fog patches clear. Light, variable winds. Max 9C (48F)

☐ **Outlook:** most areas will have some rain tomorrow, and it will be mild in the south with some brighter spells by afternoon. Friday will be mild and there will be some sunshine at times, but the north and west will have showers and some rain is possible in the South East.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright, c=cloud; d=drizzle, ds=dust storm; du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, g=gales, h=hail, r=rain, sh=shower, sl=sleet, s=sun, t=thunder

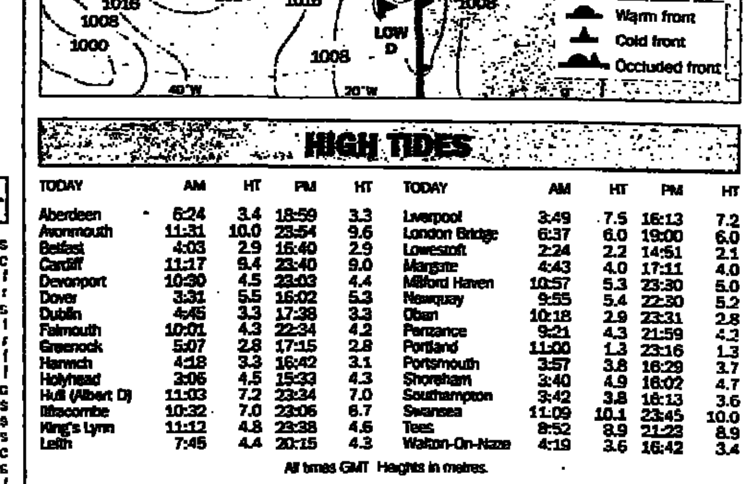
	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	0.7	0.01	6	43	sh	Jersey	2.9	0.01	10	50	b
Anglesey	2.9	0.01	7	45	b	Kinloss	0.4	0.01	5	41	c
Aspatria	1.9	0.01	6	43	sh	Leeds	0.2	0.41	6	43	r
Aviemore	1.2	0.01	5	41	sn	Lerwick	-	0.06	5	41	sh
Birmingham	-	0.08	6	43	r	Leuchars	-	0.02	6	43	c
Bognor R	0.2	0.03	7	45	r	Littlehampton	1.1	0.03	8	46	sh
Bournemth	0.4	0.02	7	45	r	London	3.9	0.01	9	48	b
Bristol	-	0.01	7	45	c	Lowestoft	-	0.04	6	43	d
Buxton	-	0.20	2	36	sn	Manchester	0.1	0.05	5	41	sh
Cardiff	2.3	0.01	8	46	b	Margate	3.1	0.07	7	45	b
Clacton	2.6	-	7	45	b	Morecambe	0.8	0.01	7	45	du
Cleethorpes	-	0.25	6	43	r	Newcastle	-	0.15	5	41	h
Colwyn Bay	-	0.02	6	43	c	Norwich	-	0.30	5	41	r
Cromer	-	0.33	5	41	r	Oxford	1.8	0.03	7	45	s
Eastbourne	1.9	0.03	9	48	c	Penzance	3.9	0.06	9	48	s
Edinburgh	0.6	0.04	6	43	sh	Poole	3.0	0.02	7	45	s
Eskdalemuir	1.3	0.10	5	41	sn	Prestatyn	0.2	0.07	7	45	sh
Exmouth	2.0	0.01	8	46	b	Ross on Wye	0.7	0.01	7	45	b
Fishguard	5.2	0.01	7	45	s	Saunton Sands	5.0	0.02	9	48	s
Folkestone	1.7	0.09	8	46	c	Scarborough	-	0.17	5	41	d
Glasgow	1.9	0.01	8	46	sh	Shrewsbury	-	0.09	5	41	r
Guernsey	5.1	0.01	11	52	s	Southend	2.2	0.01	7	45	c
Hastings	1.3	0.02	8	46	b	Southsea	1.9	0.01	8	46	r
Hayling I.	0.1	0.02	7	45	r	Stornoway	9.0	0.01	8	46	s
Herne Bay	1.3	0.02	8	46	b	Swanage	0.2	0.01	7	45	d
Hove	0.2	-	8	46	c	Teignmouth	X	0.01	6	43	b
Hunstanton	-	0.36	5	41	r	Tenby	4.8	-	9	48	s
Isle of Man	6.7	-	8	46	s	Torquay	2.1	0.01	9	48	b
Isle of Wight	X	0.01	7	45	c	Weymouth	0.3	0.02	7	45	r

ABROAD

	C	F			C	F			C	F			C	F	
Ajaccio	14	57	s	Dublin	5	41	f	Madrid	12	54	f	Rome	13	55	s
Akrotiri	23	73	s	Dubrovnik	10	50	f	Majorca	16	61	f	R'nldsway	6	43	c
Algiers	20	68	s	Faro	17	63	c	Malaga	15	59	s	Salzburg	4	39	f
Amst'dam	5	41	c	Florence	10	50	f	Malta	17	63	s	S Frisco	10	50	r
Athens	16	61	c	Frankfurt	7	45	f	Manches	5	41	c	Santiago	24	75	s
Bangkok	35	95	s	Funchal	18	64	f	Mexico C	22	72	s	Seoul	6	43	f
Barbados	28	82	f	Geneva	4	39	f	Miami	23	73	s	Singapore	31	88	r
Barcelona	15	59	s	Gibraltar	16	61	s	Milan	10	50	s	Stockholm	0	32	f
Beijing	1	34	s	Guernsey	6	43	c	Montreal	-7	19	s	Strasb'rg	8	46	f
Beirut	19	66	s	Helsinki	-3	27	s	Moscow	-	14	s	Sydney	22	72	c
Belgrade	10	50	f	Hong K	19	66	c	Munich	7	45	s	Tangier	19	66	s
Berlin	5	41	f	Innsbruck	4	39	f	Nairobi	27	81	f	Tel Aviv	20	68	s
Bermuda	14	57	c	Inverness	6	43	f	N York	0	32	s	Tenerife	20	68	s
Biarritz	17	63	f	Istanbul	17	63	f	New	33	37	s	Tokyo	10	50	c
Bordeaux	15	59		Jeddah	32	90	s	Newcastle	3	37	r	Toronto	-5	23	s
Brussels	5	41	f	Jersey	8	46	c	Nice	12	54	s	Tunis	18	64	f
Budapest	7	45	f	Jo'burg	25	77	s	Oslo	1	34	sn	Valencia	20	68	s
B Aires	31	88	f	L Palmas	18	64	f	Paris	3	37	r	Venice	9	48	s
Cape Tn	23	73	s	Lisbon	14	57	c	Prague	5	41	f	Vienna	8	46	f
Chicago	-2	28	f	Locarno	9	48	s	Reykjavik	0	32	f	Warsaw	7	45	c
Cologne	7	45	f	London	7	45	c	Rhodes	20	68	s	Wash'ton	2	36	s
C'phagn	7	45	f	L Angeles	15	59	s	Rio de J	31	88	f	Zurich	7	45	f
Corfu	14	57	f	Luxembg	4	39	s	Riyadh	21	70	c				

Temperatures at midday local time. X - not available

NOON TODAY



Changes to chart below from noon: low G will remain slow moving; low D will drift slowly north; low C will continue eastwards

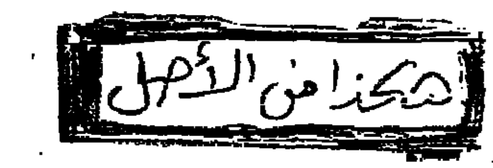
HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	6:24	3.4	18:59	3.3	Liverpool	3:49	7.5	16:13	7.2
Avonmouth	11:31	10.0	23:54	9.6	London Bridge	6:37	6.0	19:00	6.0
Belfast	4:03	2.9	16:40	2.9	Lowestoft	2:24	2.2	14:51	2.1
Cardiff	11:17	9.4	23:40	9.0	Margate	4:43	4.0	17:11	4.0
Devonport	10:30	4.5	23:03	4.4	Milford Haven	10:57	5.3	23:30	5.0
Dover	3:31	5.5	16:02	5.3	Newquay	9:55	5.4	22:30	5.2
Dublin	4:45	3.3	17:38	3.3	Oban	10:18	2.9	23:31	2.8
Falmouth	10:01	4.3	22:34	4.2	Penzance	9:21	4.3	21:59	4.2
Greenock	5:07	2.8	17:15	2.8	Portland	11:00	1.3	23:16	1.3
Harwich	4:18	3.3	16:42	3.1	Portsmouth	3:57	3.8	16:29	3.7
Holyhead	3:06	4.5	15:33	4.3	Shoreham	3:40	4.9	16:02	4.7
Hull (Albert D)	11:03	7.2	23:34	7.0	Southampton	3:42	3.8	16:13	3.6
Ilfracombe	10:32	7.0	23:06	6.7	Swansea	11:09	10.1	23:45	10.0
King's Lynn	11:12	4.8	23:38	4.6	Tees	8:52	8.9	21:23	8.9
Leith	7:45	4.4	20:15	4.3	Walton-On-Naze	4:19	3.6	16:42	3.4

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: highest day max: Guernsey, 11C (52F); lowest day max: Buxton, Derbyshire, 2C (36F); most rainfall: Coningsby, Lincolnshire, 0.46in; most sunshine: Stornoway, Hebrides, 9.0hr



Have a share in the arts

Page 43



BUSINESS · ARTS · SPORT · TELEVISION

THE TIMES

Diamond sparkles on tour

Arts, page 42

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY MARCH 10 1999

2

Retail plaudits for Budget

But there is only a cautious welcome for the Chancellor from the City

By Our Business Staff

RETAILERS emerged as the big Budget winners yesterday, boosted by measures to help lower-income consumers. But the City was more cautious, and the financial services industry expressed concern at Gordon Brown's move to publish league tables of the charges and costs of pension, savings and insurance products.

Lord Harris of Peckham, chairman of Carpetright, said "I think it is a good Budget for my business. This is a Budget that will get people spending, especially at the bottom end."

Leading shares garnered broad support from the Budget, with the FTSE 100 closing 28.9 at 6237.7 after being little changed when the Chancellor began his Budget speech.

The pound also strengthened as traders concluded the Bank of England may now prove more reluctant to cut interest rates. The pound rose 1 cent to $1.6183. Against sterling the euro fell to 67.23p from 67.67p.

Prominent among rising shares was Dixons, the electricals retailer, which rose 50p to a new high of £12.18, as the Government set out plans to spend £1.7 billion on a "computers for all" initiative.

Big business gave a grudging welcome to the Chancellor's "enterprise" Budget but the measures to help new ventures and start-ups were criticised as modest and Mr Brown had a sting in the tail for manufacturers, with the promise of an energy tax that would increase costs for capital-intensive industries.

The Confederation of British Industry said there was no radical change for business. Adair Turner, the CBI Director-General, said "We asked for a boring Budget and this is not a bad result. The fiscal balance is reasonable, provided that the economic recovery takes place in line with the Chancellor's projections."

The Institute of Directors, that lobbies for smaller businesses, welcomed Gordon Brown's focus on lower taxes, including a new 10 per cent tax rate for the smallest businesses and equity incentives for management to join new ventures.

However, the IOD queried whether the Government would meet its growth targets. Ruth Lea, head of policy, said: "It was really quite a generous Budget. We welcome the corporation tax cuts, we welcome the Small Business Agency. We get very positive messages from this Government but we still have to cope with measures like the Working Time Directive."

The TUC said the Chancellor's Budget forecast of rising Government surpluses justified the case for an early cut in base rates. John Monks, TUC General Secretary, said: "I am now looking to the Bank of England to play their part in ensuring a soft landing for the economy."

City institutions were were no more than cautious in their welcome of the Budget. Jeremy Batstone, head of research at NatWest Stockbrokers, said: "The speech looked better than it was."

The financial services sector gave a lukewarm response to Mr Brown's announcement that the Financial Services Authority, the leading City regulator, is to publish league tables of the charges and costs of pension, savings and insurance products.

Richard Royds, managing director of Mercury Asset Management's retail fund business, said: "There is nothing wrong with publishing charge or rate sheets. But the problem is that charges are only part of the equation. One must also look at performance, and performance relative to the benchmarks set for the funds."

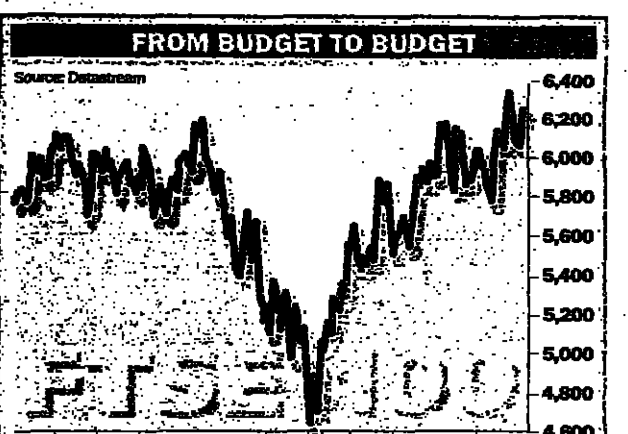
The freeze on alcohol duty brought a muted cheer from Britain's brewers but Mr Brown was dubbed the King Canute Chancellor by disgruntled retailers after his decision to put an extra 17½p on a packet of cigarettes.

The Tobacco Alliance, that represents the interests of 26,000 independent shopkeepers, said: "Mr Brown may as well try to stop the tide at Dover as stop the flow of smuggled cigarettes." Gallaher, the UK's leading tobacco company, described the rise as "bewildering", given that recent statistics showed that smoking in the UK had increased for "the first time in living memory" due to smuggling of cheap foreign tobacco which, at the same time, deprives the Treasury of more than £1 billion in tax.

Commercial property companies, already suffering from investor disenchantment, suffered a severe blow yesterday when the Chancellor raised stamp duty by ½per cent to 3½ per cent on transactions over £250,000. FPD Savills, the chartered surveyors warned that it would further penalise property as an asset compared with bonds and shares. A spokesman for Savills Fund Management said that the total cost of buying and selling a commercial building had now risen to 7 per cent, including agency and legal fees and VAT.

Venture capitalists were sceptical about the impact of the incentives for new businesses. Britain's largest backer of small businesses, 3i, criticised the Government's failure to reduce the impact of capital gains tax (CGT). Charles Richardson, director of corporate affairs at 3i, said: "The UK is out of line with the rest of the world and we need a radical reduciton in the starting rate of CGT." He said that Ireland had reduced it from 40 per cent to 20 per cent while 20 per cent was the norm in the US. Mr Richardson also said that the rules that require an investor to hold on to his stake for ten years were too long. "For serious high-tech businesses, five years is a maximum."

Britain's smokestack industries, already suffering from the strong pound, warned the Chancellor not to penalise them with the planned Climate Change levy. The levy is intended to meet Britain's commitment to reduce greenhouse gases by 20 per cent. The Energy Intensive Users' Group, which represents steel, cement, glass and chemical companies gave warning yesterday that Britain's electricity costs were already among the highest in Europe.





FIONA HANSON · PA

Spring tonic: Gordon Brown's Budget found favour with retailers, but the City was more cautious

Business Today



Grapes of wrath

City firms and legal risks of drink and drugs

Page 33

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6237.7	(+28.9)
Yield	2.55%	
FTSE All Share	2861.13	(+12.34)
Nikkei	15096.70	(+317.65)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9786.16	(+58.55)*
S&P Composite	1291.81	(+9.08)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	[illegible]	[illegible]
Long bond	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yield	5.59%*	(5.59%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	[illegible]	[illegible]
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	115.83	(116.37)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6170*	(1.6087)
London:		
$	1.6148	(1.6076)
€	1.4832	(1.4773)
SFr	2.3655	(2.3534)
Yen	195.98	(196.00)
£ Index	102.5	(102.1)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.0873*	(1.0888)
SFr	1.4647*	(1.4635)
Yen	121.38*	(121.85)
$ index	108.7	(109.0)

Tokyo close Yen 121.75

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day(May)	$12.05	($11.90)

GOLD

London close	$292.35	($289.65)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates .... Page 30

BMW to replace Rovers

BMW confirmed yesterday that it will replace the ageing Rover 200 and 400 range of saloon cars but stopped short of saying that the successor will be built at Longbridge in Birmingham (Adam Jones and Sigrid Aufterbeck write).

The future of the car plant will therefore not be known until Stephen Byers, the Trade Secretary, has ruled on BMW's application for government money towards the project.

The sum requested has been estimated at £150 million to £200 million. A decision could come within a fortnight.

Yesterday, Rover said there is a direct contest between Longbridge and Hungary for the replacement work. However, one analyst suggested that BMW was using the Hungarian option as a way of getting money from the UK under the EU regional assistance scheme.



RJR Nabisco fights Icahn with $8bn sale

From Andrew Butcher in New York

RJR NABISCO yesterday acted to thwart an expected boardroom coup by Carl Icahn, a large investor, by selling its international tobacco business for $8 billion (£5 billion) and splitting its US tobacco and food interests.

Japan Tobacco has bought the foreign rights to sell RJR's brands, such as Camel and Winston, worldwide after a bid battle with the global market leaders Philip Morris and British American Tobacco (BAT). The RJR-Japan Tobacco deal brings together the third and fourth-largest cigarette makers in the world. Japan Tobacco is thought to have paid at least $1 billion more than others offered.

The sale and the splitting of RJR Nabisco's remaining US cigarette business and its 80.6 per cent controlling stake in the Nabisco biscuit business are seen as giving Steven Goldstone, RJR Nabisco's chief executive, breathing space in his board's defence against Mr Icahn. The legendary corporate raider has built a 7.7 per cent stake in RJR and had pressed it to separate its cigarette and biscuit businesses. He has been denied a board seat and may yet launch a fight for board control this week.



Goldstone: breathing space

Splitting the tobacco and biscuit businesses may face legal problems, with some experts predicting that RJR will be hit by accusations of "fraudulent conveyancing". Tobacco lawsuit plaintiffs may allege that money that is rightfully theirs has been channelled to shareholders through the spin-off.

With the sale of the international tobacco business, RJR's main business will be Nabisco food products. The company will be renamed Nabisco Holdings Corporation.

The US cigarette arm is plagued by debts arising from health-related lawsuits. Last November RJR joined other tobacco companies in a $206 billion settlement of lawsuits launched by 46 American states. Most of the cash from the sale to Japan Tobacco will be used to pay debts accumulated by the tobacco business.

RJR brands account for 24 per cent of US cigarette sales. Philip Morris brands have almost half the market. BAT is the third-biggest US manufacturer, with 16 per cent of sales.

Exchange lengthens trading day

THE London Stock Exchange is to open an hour earlier to harmonise its trading day with the Frankfurt Bourse. The move is part of an initial package of changes to cement the alliance of the two exchanges (Graham Searjeant writes).

Trading in London will officially start at 8am and finish, as now, at 4.30pm, lengthening the trading day by an hour. Frankfurt will trade from 9am to 5.30pm continental time, the same actual time as London.

Frankfurt's trading session will stay the same length as now but will open and close 30 minutes later. No date has been set for the changes, but they are intended to come in later this year.

For London, the change in hours marks a *volte face*. Only nine months ago, the opening was put back from 8.30am to 9am to reduce price distortions in the electronic order system it had introduced for FTSE 100 stocks. Commentary, page 31

Sony cutbacks jeopardise jobs in South Wales

By Robert Whymant and Jason Nisse

HUNDREDS of jobs could be under threat in Wales after Sony Corporation, the consumer electronics company, said that it would cut 17,000 jobs — 10 per cent of its worldwide workforce — over the next four years.

Nobuyuki Idei, Sony's president, said that the steps were "designed to expand our strong divisions and slim down our weak areas".

It is understood this means that a greater concentration on digital products — such as the PlayStation games console, the new DVD audio/visual systems and the Vega digital TV — and less on traditional Sony products, such as the Walkman portable stereo and video recorders.

The jobs will be eliminated as Sony slims down its global network of 70 manufacturing sites to 55 by the end of March 2003. Sony said that operations in Britain and other parts of Europe, as well as the United States and Asia, including Japan, would all be affected by the job cuts.

The company employs 7,000 people in the UK, though about 2,500 of these are in research and development or in the computer games business, which is almost certain to be unaffected.

The company employs 4,500 at two factories in Pencoed and Bridgend in South Wales. The factories make televisions and video recorders, two product lines that Sony may decide to cut back.

The Tokyo market liked the news. Sony shares surged Y890, or 8.86 per cent, to close at Y10,940, and shares in the three subsidiaries traded on the Tokyo Stock Exchange's Second Section also rose sharply.

Deal nears for First Choice

FIRST Choice Holidays revealed yesterday that it is in the final stages of merger talks with Kuoni Reisen, the Swiss travel group, to create a £1.5 billion pan-European travel group listed in London and Zurich (Fraser Nelson writes).

The company, which said six days ago that it was in takeover talks, said a formal deal should be agreed by Monday.

Ian Clubb, First Choice executive chairman, will take the helm of the enlarged company even though Kuoni shareholders will own 53 per cent of it.

The merger would be accomplished by creating a new company, Kuoni plc, which would make an all-share offer for both First Choice and Kuoni Reisen.

The two companies are roughly the same size in market capitalisation and profits. First Choice is valued at £750 million and made £50 million for the 1998 financial year. Kuoni is valued at £778 million and last year made profits of £47.2 million.

Alliance comes under pressure from institutions

By Jason Nissé

SIR DAVID ALLIANCE, the founder of Coats Viyella and its chairman for the past decade, could face pressure from institutional investors to resign because of the increasingly bitter row over the future of the company.

Leading shareholders are understood to be pressing the textiles group to explore a merger with one of its main rivals as a way of restoring the fortunes of the company, which has lost 80 per cent of its market value over the past five years.

Phillips & Drew Fund Management, which has recently shown an appetite for shareholder activism, is Coats's largest investor with 18.9 per cent. Other leading investors include Brinson Partners, which like P&D is owned by UBS.

Michael Ost, chief executive of Coats Viyella, yesterday denied that the company was under any pressure to seek out mergers. He said that P&D had not mentioned any imperative to pursue a merger, though it is understood that P&D is seeking meetings with the senior Coats directors.

Possible partners include Courtaulds Textiles, William Baird and Dewhirst, though Mr Ost said that these companies all faced similar problems.

Leading shareholders believe it is Sir David who is the largest barrier to radical change at Coats. "The problems may well be with the chairman," said one leading investor.

Yesterday Coats reported sales in 1998 from continuing operations fall 6 per cent to £2.07 billion, but tight management of cash led to a 7 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £35.5 million. A large advance corporation tax write-off meant a tax bill of £56.2 million and there was a loss per share of 3.8p compared with zero earnings in 1997. A final dividend of 1.5p makes a total of 3p for the year (4.7p).

Sad decline, page 33

DC Cook issues profits warning

By Martin Barrow

DC COOK, the automotive distributor, yesterday gave warning that first-half pretax profits would fall below those reported in first six months of the previous year because of weak demand for new cars.

Although demand had improved with the introduction of the new T registration plate this would not be sufficient to offset the downturn in the previous months. Cook shares fell 2½p to 18p. Separately, Ryland announced a £7.48 million recommended takeover bid for fellow car dealer Wyndham Motor Group. The offer is worth 227.15p per Wyndham share, against Monday's closing price of 217½p.



Taking stock: from left, Brian Patterson of Wedgwood; Ottmar Kusel of Rosenthal; and Redmond O'Donoghue and Richard Barnes of Waterford

Waterford to cut Potteries jobs

By Fraser Nelson

THERE was further jobs misery in the Potteries yesterday when it was announced 360 jobs have been cut in Waterford Wedgwood's operations in Stoke-on-Trent. More than 260 jobs have gone with the decision to close a figurine and jewellery plant in the city while another 100 jobs are to go at the Wedgwood ceramics factory. The job losses are part of company plans to lose a total of 600 jobs.

Richard Barnes, finance director, said the cuts will allow its Stoke operations to compete with overseas rivals: "We've closed two satellite factories because there was ample space in the main factory. This restructuring will make sure Wedgwood is the lowest-cost producer for our quality of product."

The shake-up will cost Ir£24.6 million (£21.2 million), but deliver Ir£8 million savings in 1999, with annual ongoing savings of Ir£13 million.

Buoyant demand from the US, where Waterford now has a 50 per cent market share of the luxury crystal market, helped group pre-tax profits up 22 per cent to Ir£14.9 million on total sales of Ir£575 million up from Ir£417 million.

Midshires reveals its average windfall

By Gavin Lumsden

BIRMINGHAM Midshires, the building society, yesterday announced that about 400,000 of its members will receive a cash windfall averaging £1,250, a higher figure than forecast, when it converts to bank status next month.

The society is redistributing £750 million between its one million members as part of its takeover by Halifax, the bank, and will abandon its mutual status on April 19.

The society said a High Court action to stop the deal, promised by Bob Goodall, founder of the Save Our Building Societies pressure group, remained a threat but that it was confident it would convert to a bank on schedule.

To get the £1,250 windfall members have to have been with the society since before December 31, 1995. Those who joined after that date will receive 400 Halifax preference shares, worth about £400.

Members should receive a letter by March 17 detailing how much they stand to receive and what action they need to take. It intends to credit savings accounts or to send a cheque by April 26 and to post share certificates three days later.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Partco cautious on market recovery

PARTCO GROUP, the car parts distributor and crash repair group, said that despite recording improved trading levels during the first quarter of 1999, it remains cautious in predicting the timing of any sustained recovery in the UK market. The group, which last year rejected £400 million merger talks with the rival Finelist, reported 1998 pre-tax profits up 3 per cent to £24.3 million, before exceptionals, from £23.6 million a year ago. Sales rose by 13 per cent to £435.6 million (£386 million).

The majority of the improvement came from the group's car parts distribution operations, which now account for 68 per cent of its business, based mainly within its Partco Autoparts and Brown Brothers businesses. The rise balanced reduced profits in the commercial vehicle and heat exchange and manufacturing divisions. The final dividend is being raised to 7p, taking the full-year payout to 10p (8.7p). Earnings per share rose to 21.2p (21.1p). The shares fell 3p to 179½p. Overall the UK car aftermarket shrank by between 4 and 5 per cent during 1998. Partco attributed its growth during the period on concentrating on the relative growth areas of exhausts, electrics, suspension and paint supplies.

William Wrigley dies

WILLIAM WRIGLEY, head of the world's largest chewing gum company, has died aged 66. He was the third-generation Wrigley to head the Chicago-based company founded by his grandfather and namesake 70 years ago. His death came a day after his 35-year-old son, William Wrigley, was named acting president of the company. The senior Wrigley, whose fortune was estimated at $2.7 billion (£1.69 billion) by *Fortune* magazine last year, was hospitalised for treatment of pneumonia last Friday.

Chiltern Railways sold

THE last of the railway fatcats were given official government endorsement yesterday as John O'Brien, the franchising director, approved Chiltern Railways's £10.4 million takeover by John Laing, the construction company. Adrian Shooter, Alex Turner and Owen Edgington — a trio of former British Rail managers who backed the 1996 buyout, will share £1.5 million after selling a controlling stake to John Laing.

Andersen revenues up

THE inexorable rise of Andersen Consulting has continued with global figures showing revenues for 1998 up to $8.3 billion (£5.1 billion) on a growth rate of 25 per cent. UK figures rose by 23 per cent to £545 million. It is the third year in a row that the global firm has risen by at least 25 per cent. The UK firm is now the largest contributor to Andersen Consulting's fees outside of the US. Andersen Consulting is fighting to break free from the rest of the Andersen network.

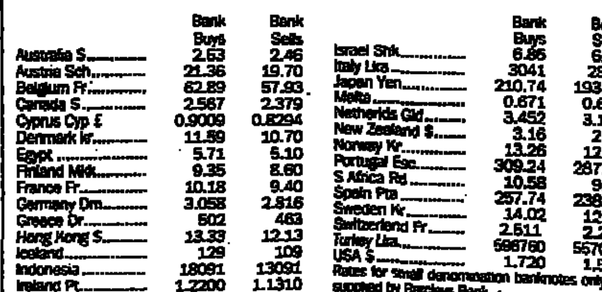
BASF issues warning

BASF, the German chemicals company, yesterday gave warning that price pressures would make 1999 a difficult year as it reported a modest rise in earnings for 1998 amid dwindling sales. The company reported a 2.7 per cent rise in net profits to DM3.3 billion (£1.17 billion) for 1998 despite a 3.1 per cent drop in sales to DM54.1 billion. The 1998 dividend is lifted to DM2.2 from DM2 in 1997. The company also announced plans to obtain a New York share listing.

EU agrees Cook deal

THE formation of a new British holiday travel company has been given the go-ahead by the European Commission. Yesterday's announcement clears the way for the creation of Thomas Cook Holdings, a joint venture between the Thomas Cook Group and the American travel company Carlson Leisure. Thomas Cook Holdings will provide foreign package holidays to UK consumers, using its own in-house charter airline capacity and its own chain of travel agencies.

EXCHANGE RATES



	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.63	2.46
Austria Sch	21.36	19.70
Belgium Fr	62.89	57.93
Canada $	2.567	2.379
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9009	0.8294
Denmark Kr	11.59	10.70
Egypt	5.71	5.10
Finland Mkk	9.35	8.60
France Fr	10.18	9.40
Germany Dm	3.058	2.816
Greece Dr	502	463
Hong Kong $	13.33	12.13
Iceland	129	109
Indonesia	18091	13091
Ireland Pt	1.2200	1.1310
Israel Shk	6.86	6.20
Italy Lira	3041	2804
Japan Yen	210.74	193.21
Malta	0.671	0.612
Netherlds Gld	3.452	3.157
New Zealand $	3.16	2.92
Norway Kr	13.26	12.32
Portugal Esc	309.24	287.21
S Africa Rd	10.58	9.62
Spain Pta	257.74	238.95
Sweden Kr	14.02	12.8[illegible]
Switzerland Fr	2.511	2.28[illegible]
Turkey Lira	596760	557065
USA $	1.720	1.577

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank.

What you hear is not what you get



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

In a Brown budget, what you hear is not quite what you get. Parents who heard that their married couple's allowance would be replaced with a new family tax cut rejoiced, unaware of the one-year time lag between the first going and the second arriving. Small firms who heard that there was to be a new 10p in the pound tax rate benefiting every company making profits up to £50,000 would have had no reason to suspect that, actually, the 10p rate will only apply to the first £10,000.

The details reveal that Mr Brown was not quite so generous as he managed to appear. He is handing back just £1 billion in the next tax year but his promises mount up and, as they come into effect, the cost will run to more than £3.5 billion.

He is lucky enough to have sufficient funds in the kitty to afford that degree of largesse but, unless the economy picks up fairly rapidly, he may find himself more constrained when drawing up his next Budget, just when the pre-election mood is encouraging him to be generous.

The surpluses he is predicting show a delightfully reassuring steady upward progression but corporate profits are not following the same graph. Despite Mr Brown's enthusiasm for encouraging enterprise, yesterday's Budget cannot negate the difficulties that British industry faces in selling to a global market when at least a quarter of the world is in recession and much of the rest is on the edge of that unhappy state.

Burdening companies with the Working Time Directive and the minimum wage is no way to increase their productivity. But those measures played no part in Mr Brown's upbeat message yesterday. It was tone as much as substance that led the City to give it an immediately positive response, with retailers in particular seeing a resurgence of consumer confidence ahead.

Perhaps they had not been paying attention as Mr Brown had talked of the plans to toughen up the Office of Fair Trading. He has talked of his crusade against high prices before. Now he proposes to give the Office of Fair Trading more cash to go out and fight, creating in the process a new criminal offence of refusing to give the OFT inspectors the information they might request.

The men from the OFT will now be promoted to the level of VAT inspectors in the business world's unpopularity stakes. There could also be some unwelcome spying on the financial services industry as a result of the demands that banks and building societies spell out their real charges for mortgages.

But there is good news in Mr Brown's decision not to press ahead, for the moment at least, with plans for a general tax avoidance provision. Such catch-all laws are always dangerous. A fair tax system is more effective and lower taxes, even by the odd penny, are a step towards that.

Just what we need: another agency

Mr Brown is relying on small firms to provide the engine of growth in the next century. The serial entrepreneur is to be the hero of the age, encouraged with tax breaks, although it seems that, in this definition, the serial has only two episodes: relief will only roll out until the entrepreneur realises his gain from his second enterprise.

A crucial move towards encouraging these small firms is to be a new government agency. That sentence alone is enough to quell many an entrepreneur's enthusiasm. Most do not want more government interference but less. The extra 2,600 regulations that have hit industry during the life time of this government have driven many entrepreneurs to admit that, had they known the burdens that would be laid on their doorsteps, they would never have started out on the entrepreneurial route.

But they will have a new advocate in government whether they want it or not. This does not mean that Business Links, that confused legacy of Michael heseltine's reign at the DTI, will be discontinued. Nor does it mean that the plethora of Tecs and Chambers of Commerce which live off small firms will be winding up. Instead of looking at the productivity of major British businesses and reaching unhelpful conclusions, it might have been helpful for the consultants at McKinsey to take a look at the array of organisations that, in theory, provide support to small firms. There is certainly scope for productivity gains there.

The Chancellor is offering some real encouragement to the infant firm with his new rate of corporation tax for tiddlers but, as soon as they show any sign of success, the 10p rate will stop. He is also extending the investment allowance for another year.

More important than that to many entrepreneurs will be the news that he is not taking a tougher line on inheritance tax. Among the many kites that had been flown before this Budget was the one emblazoned with the message that there were to be moves to further limit what parents may pass on to their children. For many entrepreneurs, the urge to create something for the next generation is a crucial part of their psyche.

It was wise of Mr Brown to curb any puritan urge to be mean on this front.

Beware a Scot bearing tax reliefs

Whenever politicians deregulate company law, back enterprise, promote company pensions or tell employees to invest in their own company, they should think of two words: Robert Maxwell.

The late entrepreneur and MP's name is a shorthand. It reminds us that things can go wrong in the most honest, decent company; that not all entrepreneurs can be relied on to behave with integrity and that well-meaning theorists can play into the hands of the unscrupulous.

Gordon Brown's "all-employee share scheme" is the latest of many schemes to nudge employees into buying shares in their own companies to build identification with the company's goals. Most date from the Thatcher era.

If employees have not taken the hint by now, perhaps it is because canny householders have worked out for themselves that you should not put all your financial eggs in one basket: job, pension, savings.

Mr Brown's scheme would enable shares to be bought out of pre-tax income, but the tax is only deferred. No problem, if the shares produce tax-free gains. Not so good if there is tax to pay when your shares have tumbled and you have lost your job.

That fate is not confined to dodgy companies. Ask shareholders in half a dozen of our biggest, most respectable food groups.

Early warning

GLOBAL trading should mean longer hours in markets with ambition. The London Stock Exchange lost face last June when it pushed back the morning start to cope with the limitations of its US-style Sets blue chip trading system. To match its German allies, who are used to getting their towels out early, London is now to lengthen its day by a full hour, a rare fruit of European harmonisation. Customers, rather than insiders, are coming first. But both exchanges had better beware of the Working Time Directive.

Asia Pacific losses hit BAT's value

By Paul Armstrong

INVESTORS fled the tobacco sector yesterday amid poor results from British American Tobacco and the latest rise in excise duty on cigarettes in the Budget.

BAT's valuation was cut by £237 million after the company reported that its operations in Asia-Pacific had made a £21 million loss in the quarter to December 31 and that conditions remained tough.

About £110 million was wiped off the value of Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco's value was cut by £30 million after the increase in tobacco excise of inflation plus 5 per cent.

Tobacco companies blame the UK's high excise rates for the sharp rise in the cheaper, illegal cigarette imports that have been taking market share from legitimate suppliers.

BAT reported a 16 per cent slump in pre-tax profit to £738 million for 1998. The result was hit by a £613 million exceptional charge relating to the settlement of legal action in the US. Operating profit before exceptionals slipped 3 per cent to £1.55 billion, reflecting weak trading conditions in Asia and Brazil and the outbreak of a price war in the US.

A final dividend of 16p was declared, taking the full-year payout to 24p. A special interim dividend of 4p will also be paid in July.

BAT estimated that the cigarette market worldwide had fallen by about 0.3 per cent last year, ending a long trend of annual growth of between zero and 1 per cent.

Michael Prideaux, director of corporate affairs, said it was too difficult to forecast when there would be a turnaround in the company's Asian markets.

Mr Prideaux said that there had been an erosion of the price increases recorded in the US market last year as the leading cigarette makers scrambled for market share. But he hoped that the need to fund the US settlement would result in some of the losses being regained.

Mr Prideaux also played down the prospect of more health-related compensation payouts, saying the position was "much, much better" than last year. He said the tobacco industry had drawn comfort from several recent court rulings that had fallen in its favour.

BAT expects to know by the end of this month whether European regulators will launch a full-scale inquiry into the company's proposed merger with Rothmans International.

Tempus, page 32

Zurich to raise cost of revamp by $1bn

By Caroline Merrell

ZURICH Financial Services, formed from the merger between Zurich Insurance and BAT's financial services business, has increased its restructuring charges by $1 billion (£625 million) to $2.4 billion.

The majority of this increase in restructuring cost relates to Eagle Star, originally part of BAT. About $200 million of the extra charge will cover the expense of closing offices and paying redundancy costs.

A Zurich spokeswoman refused to comment on the number of job losses, but said: "Most of the extra charge relates to the UK."

A further $800 million of the restructuring costs will be used to strengthen reserves in the non-life fund of Eagle Star. The spokeswoman said that the company had made the changes to Eagle Star to bring the reserves in the fund in line with Zurich's general insurance fund.

Zurich said that the annual cost savings from the merger are expected to increase from $400 million to $500 million by 2001.

Rolf Hueppi, Zurich chief executive officer, said: "The initial strategic logic for the merger has been reconfirmed. We continue aggressively to exploit the opportunities offered by this merger."

Rhodia confirmation

By Paul Durman

RHODIA, the French chemicals company, has confirmed that it is considering an offer for Albright & Wilson, the British phosphates producer that earlier this week recommended a £408 million offer from Albemarle Corporation of the US.

The announcement pushed Albright's shares 8½p higher to 138p, preventing Albemarle adding to the 18.6 per cent stake it acquired on Monday at its offer price of 130p a share.

Rhodia, which is 68 per cent owned by Rhône-Poulenc, which is advised by NM Rothschild and Warburg Dillon Read, is thought to be concerned about the strong position that Albemarle has already secured. The company may also face difficulties financing a higher offer: its shares have performed badly and it already has substantial borrowings.

Thornton resignation

By Sarah Cunningham

JOHN THORNTON has stepped down as chairman of Laura Ashley, the struggling retailer, blaming his heavy commitments at Goldman Sachs, the American bank of which he is now co-chief operating officer.

Mr Thornton is being replaced by Tan Sri Dr Kay Peng Khoo, chairman and chief executive of Malayan United Industries, the largest single shareholder in Laura Ashley. Dr Khoo is currently a non-executive director.

David Walton Masters, a non-executive director, is to be non-executive deputy chairman. He is managing director of Kerry Investment Management in Hong Kong, but is returning to the UK to be executive deputy chairman of Regal Hotel Group.

Kwan Cheong Ng, a Malaysian, was made Laura Ashley's chief executive earlier this year.

STOCK MARKET  MICHAEL CLARK

FTSE takes lead from Wall Street confidence

WALL STREET'S advance on the 10,000 level seemed to hold more appeal for City investors than any of the proposals emanating from Gordon Brown.

While the London equity market gave cautious approval to Gordon Brown's Budget package and closed with modest gains on the day, traders emphasised that much of the rise was attributable to the influence of New York where opening rises were recorded.

The FTSE 100 index ended the session 28.9 up at 6,237.7 with the FTSE All-share index adding 12.34 at 2,861.13 in conditions that saw a total of 995 million shares change hands.

But not everyone emerged from the Budget in good shape. The demand for increased competition among the water utilities and airport operators left them nursing sharp falls. **BAA Group**, the airport operator, fell 10½p to 695p.

Among the water companies **Anglian** shed 20p to 710p. **Pennon Group** 21½p to £10.01, **Severn Trent** 37p to 882p, **Thames Water** 47p to 988p, **United Utilities** 33p to 784½p and **Yorkshire Water** 20½p to 447p.

The power generators were also under a cloud, reflecting the Government's aims of introducing a business energy levy and its determination to combat the greenhouse effect. Brokers say it could add substantially to their cost base. **PowerGen** fell 14p to 734½p, **Scottish Power** 20½p to 545½p, and **Scottish & Southern Energy** 16p to 555p.

British American Tobacco finished 15p down at 557½p on the back of yesterday's lower profits and Mr Brown's 17½p rise in a packet of cigarettes. **Gallaher** ended 15½p lower at 414½p despite Charterhouse Securities, the broker, raising its recommendation for the shares from "hold" to "accumulate". **Imperial Tobacco** was 4p off at 718½p.

Drinks companies were given plenty to cheer by the Chancellor's decision to freeze duty on beer and spirits. Brokers say share prices should reflect the good news when trading resumes this morning. Last night **Bass** rose 13½p to 900½p, **Scottish & Newcastle** 7p at 705½p, **Joseph Holt** 22½p at £14.77½, and **Highland Distillers** 1p to 247p, while **Allied Domecq** finished 4½p cheaper at 487½p, and **Diageo** 9½p at 724½p.



Paul Walker, left, and Michael Jackson, Sage chairman, saw the shares surge 67½p as another director cut his holding

The Chancellor's proposal of "computers for all" helped selective technology stocks and suppliers. **RM** put on 46p at 625p, **Logica** 14p to 689p, and **Capita Group** 25p to 678½p.

The quarterly reshuffle of the constituents of the top 100 companies takes place later today. It will see two automatic new entries in **South African Breweries**, up 22½p at 507½p, and **Energis**, down 42½p at £15.55, after National Grid's move to reduce its holding below 50 per cent. They are likely to be joined by **Emap**, 25p better at £14.15, and **Misys**, 8p firmer at 645p.

Among those almost certain to go are **Tomkins**, 3½p easier at 206½p, and **Williams**, up 4½p at 364½p. They are likely to be joined by **Safeway**, 7p off at 241½p, **Gallaher** or **Billiton**, 4½p better at 141p.

A turnaround by Credit Suisse First Boston, the broker, was responsible for a rise of 18½p to 695½p in **Hays**. The broker has moved its recommendation for the shares from "sell" to "buy" and set a target price of 750p.

Hillsdown was 4p cheaper at 73p after Merrill Lynch, the broker, downgraded its intermediate recommendation for the shares from "buy" to "neutral".

Independent Insurance rose 30½p to 280p on the back of final results. Michael Bright, director, has acquired 190,000 shares at 262½p and now speaks for 14 million, or 5.8 per cent, while his colleague, Philip Condon, has bought 38,000 shares at 262½p, raising his holding to 3.45 million, or 1.45 per cent.

Sage Group, whose chief executive is Paul Walker, advanced 67½p to £20.80 as Graham Wylie, technical director, unloaded 414,943 shares at £20. It reduces his beneficial holding in the IT specialist to 7.97 million shares.

Bargain-hunters came back for engineering and industrial companies. Rises were seen in **Scapa**, 7½p to 108p, **Glynwed International**, 9½p to 206p, **Morgan Crucible**, 10p to 231½p, **Senior Engineering**, 6p to 143p, and **Delta**, 7½p to 132p.

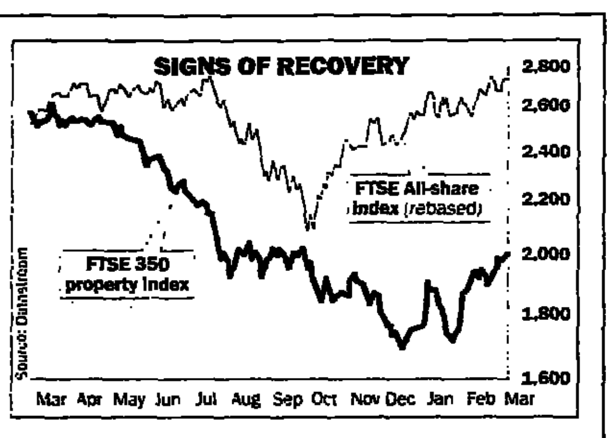
Shares of **Epicore Network** were suspended at 12½p. The company will de-list its shares from AIM after undergoing a transformation in its activities.

There was little joy for **Corporate Services** in the wake of this week's shock profits warning with the price ending another 25p lower at 88p.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** The bond market gave a frosty reception to the Government's funding proposals. Prices fell sharply in late trading along with the future and short sterling. There are worries that the bond market will be required to help to fund the proposed £4 billion of tax cuts, resulting in a welter of new bond issues.

In the futures pit the June series of the long gilt lost an early lead to close 69p lower at £115.68, while the September short sterling fell 11p to £94.76.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Shares were higher after computer buy programs helped to boost the financial and technology sectors. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 58.55 at 9,786.16.



MANY false dawns have been experienced by investors monitoring the property sector.

In its latest review of the sector, Sutherlands, the broker, says confidence is returning and the share prices of the better performers are starting to recover. But it admits there is a lot of lost ground to be made up.

That said, companies with a December year end have been reporting better than expected results, which is seen as positive.

Those companies that Sutherlands has singled out for attention include Capital Shopping, steady at 384p. Despite retailers generally experiencing a difficult time, the group's focus on regional shopping malls is paying dividends.

Estates & General, unchanged at 78p, is also on the "buy" list after achieving strong profits growth.

However, there was no such support for Chesterfield Properties, down 8p at 405p, after Commerzbank cut its rating for the shares from "hold" to "sell".

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	9786.16 (+58.55)
S&P Composite	1291.81 (+9.08)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	15096.70 (+317.65)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	10532.95 (+268.96)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	522.27 (-3.25)

Sydney:

AO	2930.8 (-8.8)

Frankfurt:

DAX	4758.46 (-30.23)

Singapore:

Straits	1440.52 (-11.32)

Brussels:

BEL20	3305.39 (-17.06)

Paris:

CAC-40	4159.80 (-16.17)

Zurich:

SMI Index	7267.2 (+81.3)

London:

FT 30	3775.5 (+4.6)
FTSE 100	6237.7 (+28.9)
FTSE 250	5375.7 (+16.5)
FTSE 350	2959.5 (+12.9)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2859.44 (+23.70)
FTSE All-Share	2861.13 (+12.34)
FTSE Non Financials	2902.00 (+11.97)
FTSE Fixed Interest	153.41 (-0.44)
FTSE Govt Secs	112.50 (-0.53)
Bargains	83920
SEAQ Volume	998.0m
US$	1.6149 (+0.0066)
Euro	0.6743 (-0.0043)
£:SDR	1.1745
Exchange Index	102.5 (+0.4)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
RPI	163.4 Jan (2.4%) Jan 1987 = 100
RPIX	161.8 Jan (2.6%) Jan 1987 = 100

RECENT ISSUES

Close Bros Dev VCT	100	..
Enhanced Zero Trust	100½	...
Gander Properties	7½	...
Jupiter En Zero Dv Pf	107½	...
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	100	+ 1
Luminar Warrants	277½	− 2½
NBA Quantum	110	..
Sports Internet	115	+ 26½
Synstar	129	− 3

RIGHTS ISSUES

Brancote n/p (10)	1¼	...
Oxford Biomedica n/p (15)	4½	− 1½
Peptide Thera n/p (78)	20	+ 2½

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Lon Forfaiting	64½	+ 13	+ 25.2
Terranova	94½	+ 19	+ 25.1
Tomkinsons	194	+ 30½	+ 18.6
FS Dev	17	+ 2½	+ 17.2
Moorfield Est	26	+ 3¾	+ 16.8
Albion	87½	+ 12½	+ 16.6
Havelock Euro	64½	+ 9	+ 16.2
Ugland	92	+ 12	+ 15.0
Independent	280	+ 30½	+ 12.2
Cortecs	23	+ 2½	+ 12.1
Euro Sales Fn	345	+ 35	+ 11.2
Mayborn	45	+ 4½	+ 11.1
Booth Inds	41½	+ 4	+ 10.6
Telemetrix	76½	+ 6½	+ 9.2
Tibbet & Britten	354	+ 29	+ 8.9
BLP Group	81½	+ 6½	+ 8.6
Ultraframe	376½	+ 30	+ 8.6
HW Group	129	+ 10	+ 8.4
Stallware	262½	+ 20	+ 8.2
Albright & Wil	140	+ 10½	+ 8.1
BCO Technologies	68½	+ 5	+ 7.8
Scapa	108	+ 7½	+ 7.4
Hunting	130	+ 8½	+ 6.9
Intercare Gp	69½	+ 4½	+ 6.9

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Corp Services	88	− 25	− 22.1
Ramsdens (H)	112½	− 17½	− 13.4
Cook (DC)	18	− 2½	− 12.1
Orbis	31¾	− 4	− 11.1
Bullough	69½	− 8	− 10.3
Premier	13¼	− 1½	− 10.1
Elec Retail Sys	115	− 12½	− 9.8
Alldays	75	− 8	− 9.6
Country Gdns	210½	− 21½	− 9.2
James R Knowles	29½	− 3	− 9.2
Cairn Energy	108½	− 7½	− 6.4

TEMPUS

Smouldering worries

AFTER the triumphalism that surrounded the news before Christmas of the Rothmans merger, the old woes came back to haunt British American Tobacco yesterday. Long-standing problems emanating from Asia and exposure to huge health-related compensation payments have cast a shadow over this group for several years. Yesterday came the plain proof that these worries remain and are as troubling as ever.

There are also justifiable concerns about the price war which has exploded in the US as the cigarette majors fight for market share. Price rises, vaunted six months ago as capable of paying the litigation bill, have not stuck.

The industry's solid margins and strong cashflow are considered two of the better reasons to hold tobacco stocks, so profit erosion because of price cutting is bad news. However, while the short-term risks can not be overlooked, BAT's longer-term prospects remain good.

The merger with Rothmans International, if approved, is certain to deliver significant production savings. It will also lift substantially BAT's presence in the emerging markets, where, despite the current trials, the biggest growth opportunities sit.

The Asian markets may take upwards of a year to start growing again, but when they do BAT is well-placed to seize on the turnaround. The tobacco companies' secret weapon is yield, and BAT offers investors gross income of about 4.5 per cent. This is a premium to the rest of the market but it also reflects the depressing impact of litigation risk on BAT's share price.

It is not everyone's cup of tea but, ethical funds apart, the exposure to high-growth markets makes BAT a long-term hold.

Ind Insurance

IN GENERAL insurance terms, 1998 has been one of the toughest years on record.

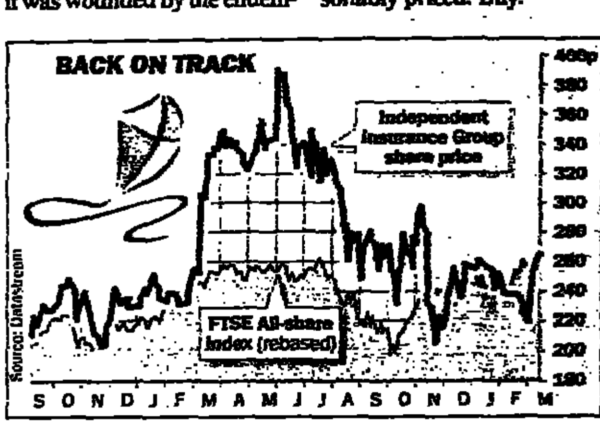
Storms and floods led to sky-high claims and overcapacity brought cutthroat competition. Only a handful of companies generated an underwriting profit last year and Independent Insurance is one of those few. Living up to the old adage about insurance companies being investment trusts with an expensive hobby, most insurers offset lousy underwriting results with investment gains.

Tight underwriting means that Independent escapes such jibes.

It has not needed to rewrite its book as times got tough and, having pulled out of launching a new life company because of unfavourable market conditions, it is now concentrating on organic growth in the commercial market and writing business on five-year contracts.

As this column noted in August, the City had become accustomed to hearing ever better news from Independent. Some shareholders forgot that they were holding an insurance company and when the inevitable happened and it was wounded by the endemic cyclicality of insurance, the shares were hit hard.

Independent shares were overbought, but they were then oversold. Yesterday's 22 per cent rise in underwriting profit has helped to restore some sense. Growth may be slower than in the early years, but there is plenty of life left, and the shares are reasonably priced. Buy.



BBA Group

NAPPIES and aviation spares appear an odd business combination but it works for BBA Group. The businesses assembled by Roberto Quarta over the past few years turned in another solid set of results yesterday, reinforcing the support for the shares that have risen from 174p to 442p since 1994.

Making the non-woven fabrics that go into nappies and sanitary towels is the best bit of BBA. Non-wovens already make up the larger part of its "materials technology" business and materials technology is the biggest contributor to group profits. The attraction of non-woven materials is clear — it feeds on the growing worldwide demand for health and hygiene.

The draw of the smaller friction materials side of this division — which supplies car brake parts — is less obvious, but it is currently well supported by the buoyant US economy. Ditto the aviation services business.

Although BBA shares slipped back a few pence yesterday, the stock has recovered strongly from the economic gloom of last September, when it dropped to below 300p. But despite the recovery, the shares trade on the equivalent of only 16 times forecast earnings.

Mr Quarta has worked wonders with this group and can add more, both organically and by acquisition. Buy.

Caradon

UNDER the newish leadership of Jürgen Hintz, Caradon has also taken some brave strategic decisions. Much against the fashion, which has made the widening of profit margins the kingpin corporate goal, Caradon has decided to cut prices. It was becoming painfully clear that Caradon's past practice of protecting and increasing margins by raising prices meant the firm was losing sales at alarming speed. Clearly there is no point to selling unprofitably, but equally there is scant reason to increase prices so that you cannot sell.

Lowering prices means Caradon will see sales and profits fall in the short term but looking further out, the hope is that Caradon can steal market share and build profits through volume and cost reductions.

Mr Hintz deserves credit for reshaping the business but doubts remain about the growth opportunities. Caradon needs to demonstrate that there is something similar to BBA's non-wovens tucked away, or acquirable, if it is to progress.

The restructuring process should underpin Caradon's ability to fund the 8 per cent dividend yield, and that alone makes the stock attractive. But it is hard to envisage significant capital growth in the next six months.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Mar	863-858	May	964 SLR
May	870-869	Jul	978 BID
Jul	888-885	Sep	993 BID
Sep	unq	Dec	unq
Dec	924 SLR		
Mar	944-942		Volume 5213

ROBUSTA COFFEE

Mar	1715-1712	Nov	1565 BID
May	1585-1584	Jan	unq
Jul	unq	Mar	....
Sep	1573 BID		Volume 4075

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Dec	195.0-93.1
Spot unq		Mar	200.5-98.1
May	208.3-07.3	May	201.5-99.1
Aug	200.5-99.5	Aug	205.5-01.1
Oct	194.5-93.1		Volume 2541

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on March 8

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	64.89	95.95	91.38
(+/−)	+3.43	+7.42	+1.35
Eng/Wales	64.96	96.73	90.84
(+/−)	+3.28	+7.84	+1.33
%	−3.0	+16.0	−16.0
Scotland	63.36	95.27	95.69
(+/−)	+5.90	+6.32	+0.47
%	−17.0	+54.0	+6.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	11.30	−0.25
Brent 15 day (Apr)	11.90	−0.20
Brent 15 day (May)	12.05	−0.20
W Texas Intermediate (Apr)	13.90	−0.05
W Texas Intermediate (May)	13.95	−0.10

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	118 (+3)	121 (+3)
Gasoil EEC	113 (n/c)	115 (−1)
3.5 Fuel Oil	60 (+1)	62 (−1)
Naphtha	106 (−1)	112 (+1)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Mar	111.50 BID	Jun	109.00-09.25
Apr	108.25 BID	Jul	111.25-11.50
May	108.25-08.50		Vol 34940

BRENT (6.00pm)

Apr	11.84-11.87	Jul	n/a
May	11.98-11.99	Aug	n/a
Jun	12.12 BID		Vol 58706

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Mar	73.00	Mar	74.50
May	75.25	May	74.50
Jul	77.10	Sep	75.00
Sep	76.25	Nov	77.25
Nov	78.25	Jan	79.25
Volume: 345			Volume 0

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Apr	285.0	284.0
May	315.0	315.0
Jun	unq	325.0
		Volume 82

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

Apr 45.00-45.50

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Mar 99	1010	995	1000
Apr 99	1015	1010	1015
May 99	unq	unq	990
Jul 99	885	886	385
Vol 76 lots			Open interest 2105

Index 964 −6

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE (Official) (Volume prev day) Rudolf Wolff

	Cash	3mth	Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1372.0-1373.0	1401.0-1402.0	1904300
Lead ($/tonne)	500.00-501.00	504.00-504.50	399525
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1024.0-1025.0	1032.5-1033.5	392675
Tin ($/tonne)	5390.0-5400.0	5320.0-5325.0	13610
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1143.0-1144.0	1167.5-1168.0	1934975
Nickel ($/tonne)	4930.0-4935.0	4980.0-4985.0	161730

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Mar 99	115.98	115.98	115.10	115.08	2383	9218
	Jun 99	116.50	116.66	115.40	115.63	43428	74385
5-Year Gilt	Mar 99				107.85	0	63
	Jun 99				107.56	0	0
Italian Govt Bond	Jun 99	112.50	112.71	111.89	112.16	12500	36550
Japanese Govt Bond	Mar 99	132.86	132.89	132.53			1035
	Jun 99	131.65	131.66	131.17			2937
3-Mth Sterling	Mar 99	94.560	94.560	94.520	94.530	17795	163930
	Jun 99	94.850	94.850	94.720	94.735	35472	182133
	Sep 99	94.880	94.880	94.740	94.755	47062	183464
3-Mth Euribor	Mar 99	96.920	96.930	96.920	96.920	14434	143402
	Jun 99	97.070	97.085	97.040	97.055	49078	185898
	Sep 99	97.080	97.100	97.050	97.065	47416	121677
	Dec 99	96.830	96.845	96.785	96.825	12885	98517
	Mar 00	96.960	96.990	96.930	96.955	21595	76802
3-Mth Euroswiss	Mar 99	98.600	98.620	98.580	98.600	8986	55185
	Jun 99	98.510	98.520	98.470	98.500	13504	74333
3-Mth Euro Libor	Mar 99	96.925	96.925	96.920	96.920	1300	118983
	Jun 99	97.075	97.075	97.050	97.055	1078	107361
	Sep 99	97.090	97.090	97.070	97.065	536	93655
	Dec 99	96.835	96.835	96.800	96.825	2079	86108
	Mar 00	96.980	96.980	96.965	96.965	813	84631
FTSE 100	Mar 99	6260.0	6300.0	6196.0	6243.0	30109	160719
	Jun 99	6305.0	6342.0	6246.0	6284.0	9104	41655

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 5½ Finance House 6

Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 5½ Low 5 Week fixed: 5½

Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy 2 mth 5⅛; 3 mth 5. Sell 2 mth 4⅞; 3 mth 4⅞

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Overnight: open 5½, close 5¼					
Local Authority Deps:	[illegible]	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	4.90	n/a	4.92	5.00	5.30
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5-4
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	3ds-3pr
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par
Canada:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5¼-5	[illegible]

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $292.00-292.30 **Close:** $292.10-292.60 **High:** $293.40-293.90 **Low:** $291.50-292.00 **AM:** $291.90 **PM:** $292.95

Krugerrand: $293.00-295.00 (£181.50-183.50)

Platinum: $375.00 (£232.90) **Silver:** $5.265 (£3.275) **Palladium:** $346.00 (£214.90)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for March 9	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	10.979-11.029	11.017-11.029	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro	1.4825-1.4842	1.4825-1.4839	0.13-0.15ds	0.37-0.40ds
Montreal	2.4304-2.4498	2.4471-2.4498	0.13-0.05pr	0.25-0.12pr
New York	1.6070-1.6151	1.6144-1.6151	0.09-0.07pr	0.17-0.14pr
Oslo	12.643-12.691	12.676-12.691	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stockholm	13.183-13.253	13.231-13.253	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	195.11-196.07	195.89-196.07	[illegible]	[illegible]
Zurich	2.3522-2.3668	2.3641-2.3668	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5735-1.5748
Canada	1.5150-1.5160
Denmark	6.8247-6.8287
Euro	0.9184-0.9187
Hong Kong	7.7485-7.7490
Japan	121.47-121.52
Malaysia	3.7998-3.8002
Norway	7.8560-7.8620
Singapore	1.7300-1.7310
Sweden	8.1970-8.2070
Switzerland	1.4631-1.4636

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6070-1.6170
Australia dollar	2.5346-2.5402
Bahrain dinar	0.5990-0.6132
Brazil real*	3.0620-3.0770
Cyprus pound	0.8450-0.8638
Euro	1.4800-1.4824
Finland markka	8.7135-8.8526
Greece drachma	470.00-480.50
Hong Kong dollar	12.4870-12.4964
India rupee	67.50-69.10
Indonesia rupiah	14034.0-14634.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4845-0.4959
Malaysia ringgit	6.1238-6.1282
New Zealand dollar	3.0129-3.0187
Pakistan rupee	76.35 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.7825-5.9199
Singapore dollar	2.7874-2.7907
S Africa rand (com)	9.8020-10.0208
U A E dirham	5.8350-5.9736

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

FTSE VOLUMES

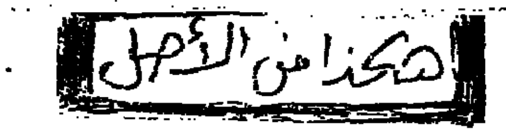
3i	386	Land Secs	1,431
ASDA Gp	19,139	Legal & Gn	2,414
Abbey Nt	1,999	Lloyds TSB	8,627
Allnce & Leic	2,450	LucasVarity	3,578
Allied Dom	1,485	Marks Spr	10,199
Allied Zrch	6,975	Nat Grid	10,359
Amvescap	1,438	Nat Power	1,629
AB Foods	770	NatWst Bk	2,090
Bk of Scot	2,392	Norwich Un	2,542
BAA	1,808	Orange	1,317
Barclays	2,802	P & O	1,073
Bass	3,107	Pearson	1,334
BG	17,511	PowerGen	1,737
Billiton	15,678	Prudential	8,141
BOC	661	Railtrack	1,517
Boots	3,087	Reckitt Col	2,017
BP Amoco	17,956	Reed Intl	3,240
BAe	5,584	Rentokil	15,510
BA	2,941	Reuters	4,308
Brit Am Tob	12,695	Rio Tinto	3,322
Brit Energy	3,866	Rolls Royce	5,245
BSkyB	2,836	Ryl & Sun	8,532
BT	10,207	Ryl Bk Sct	1,324
BTR Siebe	21,475	Safeway	5,647
CGU	3,458	Sainsbury	5,784
COLT Telecom	1,810	Schroders	144
Cable Wire	4,570	Scot & New	2,893
Cadbury	2,313	Scot Sthn Engy	2,102
Carlton Cms	1,937	Scot Power	8,832
Centrica	8,287	Securicor	873
Compass Gp	2,179	Svrn Trent	1,156
Daily Mail A	101	Shell Trans	20,838
Diageo	13,269	Smiths Ind	687
Dixons Grp	5,665	SmKl Bch	9,654
EMI	2,390	Stagecoach	1,837
Gallaher	2,963	Std Chartd	5,426
Gen Elec	5,838	Sun Life	2,886
GKN	1,588	TeleWest	4,734
Glaxo Well	5,848	Tesco	21,513
Granada	2,521	Thames W	1,489
GUS	5,519	Tomkins	6,048
GRE	8,619	Unilever	7,780
Hanson	2,159	Utd News	4,634
ICI	3,544	Utd Utilities	1,529
Imperial Tob	802	Vodafone	6,421
HSBC	3,458	WPP	2,728
Halifax	4,097	Whitbread	3,090
Hays	3,761	Williams	5,908
Kingfisher	2,310	Woolwich	4,030
Ladbroke	4,864	Zeneca	2,556

[NEW YORK]

	Mar 9 midday	Mar 8 close		Mar 9 midday	Mar 8 close		Mar 9 midday	Mar 8 close
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

LIFFE OPTIONS

Series	Calls			Puts		
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]



Eat, drink and be merry — then face the tribunal's wrath

Alcohol and other drugs are posing legal risks for firms, cautions Paul Armstrong



Tribunals will probably be unsympathetic if an employer has paid for the drink, even if it is a bottle of wine bought at an expense account lunch

City firms may feel more inclined than usual to open the drinks cabinet this Friday night to thank those hard workers who have spent late nights combing through the Budget papers. A drink on the house does, after all, go a long way to fostering the sort of workplace morale that occupies endless chapters in the management textbooks.

But the wisdom provided by these modern-day Dale Carnegies often overlooks the horrendous legal implications associated with breaking open the bubbly. In fact, many employers are probably more familiar with the French ban on others using champagne as the name for the celebratory sip than they are with the legal hazards of financing its purchase.

Put simply, if an employer pays for its employee to have a drink, it might find itself between a rock and a hard place if the employee misbehaves when he has had a few shandies.

Alcohol and a growing range of other drugs are posing increasing legal risks for employers, who are caught between the offender's entitlements, the company's obligations to the safety of other employees and performance targets.

Figures provided by the Trades Union Congress show that drink and drug misuse costs employers about £3 million a year, two-thirds of which is alcohol-related.

But both employer groups and the unions say that, despite the increasing complexity of the issue, there is no push to follow America down the path of random drug testing. This is thought to be partly because employers are failing to recognise the symptoms of many modern-day drugs as well as a reluctance to take responsibility for the administration and legal implications of testing programmes.

The TUC argues that there is insufficient evidence to show that screening programmes are effective and emphasises that they are no replacement for a sensitive approach by employers to workers with drug problems. Employees should not be punished for their problems, it says.

Lawyers specialising in this field are sounding a warning that dismissing, or even disciplining, those under the influence of drugs at work has become a minefield riddled with potentially expensive and embarrassing consequences for employers who fail to follow the handbook to the letter.

But offending employees should draw little comfort from the system. Dismissal can still be the final result of alcohol and drug abuse at work, it is just that the process is more tortuous and, in some cases, more public.

Trish Embley, a partner at Eversheds, the law firm, says that the key for employers lies in determining whether the drug use constitutes an illness or misconduct. The wrong choice here leaves the employer heavily exposed to being sued in an employment tribunal.

Ms Embley, who will take part in an Eversheds convention on this and other human resource issues later this month, says one-off binges by workers with no history of serious alcoholism or depression are clear cases of misconduct. But she cautions that tribunals will be very unsympathetic if the employer has paid for the drink — be it opening the drinks cabinet for a celebrator or even paying for the bottle of wine bought at an expense account lunch.

"Employers have to be very careful about mitigating circumstances," she says. "If the employee agrees he harassed somebody but says he was totally out of his tree it may be considered too harsh to dismiss them, rather than issue a warning, if the employer provided the drink."

Coming to work drunk or returning from the public bar an hour late are also obvious cases of misconduct.

But, for employers, the disciplinary process becomes far more complex once that determination is made. They then have to pass two tests before action can be taken, with the first being to prove to a tribunal that the employee knows he or she is not allowed to be drunk at work.

This is not as simple as it sounds. The employer has to show that the company's rules in this area have been well circulated and adhered to. Ms Embley says the action would probably collapse if the employee proves that the guidelines were breached regularly or ignored by superiors.

Employers also face a "reasonableness" test before they can start disciplinary action for misconduct. An employee coming to work drunk shortly after his wife left him would be likely to win the tribunal's support.

"If it can be shown that the employee was aware of the rules and consequences and that there is no special mitigating circumstances then the employer can go ahead and sack them," Ms Embley says. "But even if the employer passed these tests the tribunal would slate them if they had provided the drink. They would have very little chance of success.

"Everyone likes to have parties but the fact is that for employers, it is a case of handle with care. They need to remember that they are the classic danger zones where you can end up with employee-related problems."

> 'Everyone likes to have parties, but it is a case of handle with care. Employers need to remember that they are the classic danger zones where they can end up with problems'

Tony Hall, managing director of LPMS, which advises members of the British Chamber of Commerce on alcohol and drug issues, says employers are increasingly worried about their safety obligations.

Mr Hall says the issue has stretched to many everyday drugs such as cough medicine, which can result in a worker being deemed unfit to operate machinery.

"It's okay having things in black and white, but for many employers it is a question of how much they are monitored," he says.

"We are moving into the provision of counselling and stress treatment because these are often associated with drugs."

Employers who are already thinking of ways to explain the cancellation of this year's Christmas party will almost certainly surrender to their instincts at the prospect of a combined alcohol and harassment case.

The law says an employer can be held liable for harassment at a work function. Employer groups say this sometimes leads to victims demanding that action be taken against the offender, who is also afforded significant rights.

The sensitivities surrounding harassment claims, due mainly to their rapid rise to prominence in the 1980s, means there is a tendency for employers to ensure they are protected on this front. In the process, they can leave themselves heavily exposed to being sued by the offender for unfair treatment.

Again, this quandary is made substantially worse if the employer has paid for the alcohol.

Employers are also advised to protect themselves against employee claims by investigating if the drug use could be classed as an illness. That is, whether it is related to depression or other possible causes. Early symptoms include poor time keeping and erratic behaviour.

This can be resolved by asking the employee to undergo a medical examination. Refusal to comply can justify dismissal, particularly if the employer has offered counselling to help to treat the problem.

"If it is established that there is a drinking or drug problem then the employer needs to proceed much more carefully and treat the whole situation with sympathy," Ms Embley advises.

"But even in these cases there is a time when the employer is entitled to say 'enough is enough'."

The laws regarding drink and drugs at work also contradict the widely held belief that those in supervisory and management roles have more room in which to play. In front of a tribunal, they are likely to learn that the reverse is the case. The watchdog usually adopts the view that those in superior positions are supposed to set an example, increasing the chances of any dismissal being approved.

After digesting this "checklist", employers could be excused for wanting a drink. Or, at least, thinking about one.

Sad decline of Britain's once great textile giant

Jason Nissé examines the rise and fall of Coats Viyella

Whatever happened to Coats Viyella? Less than a decade ago, when it was jousting with Tootal before actually buying its rival thread company, Coats was the 40th-largest company on the London stock market.

Earlier this year its market value fell below £200 million, valuing Coats at less than the price obtained when it sold off its Dynacast engineering business, and the company is currently valued at little more than the accumulated value of the group's pension fund surplus.

The business is the creation of Sir David Alliance, the Iranian émigré who arrived in Manchester with barely two bobbins to rub together and created what was once the greatest textile company in Britain. He brought together Coats Patons, Vantona Viyella, Nottingham Manufacturing and Tootal, built state-of-the-art factories in Northern Ireland when no one else but John Delorean would invest in the six counties. He was loved by his employees, who told stories about him inspecting the ladies' toilets to make sure they were clean and remembering the birthdays of warehousemen. He was brilliant at identifying assets that were surplus to requirement and selling them for more than their apparent market value.

Alliance: Iranian émigré

But according to those who knew him well, he was no manager of a diverse business, which was so broadly spread by geography and product that there always was a fire to be fought somewhere. Much of the management was delegated to a succession of chief executives. First there was Jim McAdam, who now is seen as the saviour of Signet. The joke in textile circles was that between Mr McAdam's Glaswegian brogue and Sir David's Middle Eastern English, neither could understand a word the other was saying.

Then came Neville Bain, who came from Cadbury Schweppes and departed to the Post Office. He was also popular, though many wondered how much he knew about the textile industry.

Now there is Michael Ost. He is another person to come from outside textiles, arriving two years ago from McKechnie, the plastics group. He started a review of the business that first proposed the demerger of the Viyella home furnishing business, a move that was dropped last September, and then the sale of Dynacast, a deal apparently suggested by Mr Bain five years ago.

Now there is pressure upon Coats to do something to revive itself, such as a merger with Courtaulds Textiles or William Baird. However, within Coats there may be a weariness when these suggestions are voiced, as radical solutions.

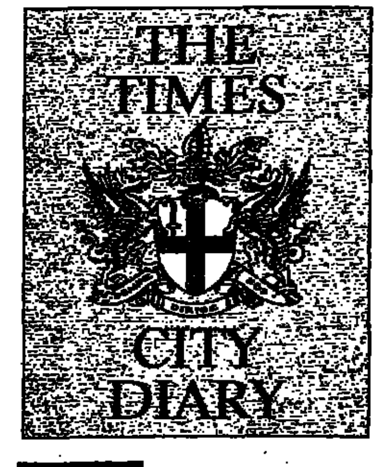
Some of the ideas bounced around the Coats boardroom in the past three or four years have included:

- ☐ selling off the company's retail operations — largely Jaeger — which are now under the control of former Sears director, Rebecca Coterell. This depends on finding a buyer, though Austin Reed has been mentioned, and a poor performance last year did not help;
- ☐ selling off the home furnishing side, which operates both as a retailer and supplier to Marks & Spencer;
- ☐ merging the clothing operations with a rival. William Baird has been mentioned, though Coats people think Dewhirst might have been a better fit. This is because the key to this operation thriving is for production largely to be moved overseas and Dewhirst has experience in this area.

The situation is certainly not helped by a combination of a strong pound and weak markets in the Far East — a situation recently described by Jim McAdam, as a "nutcracker".

It is also not helped by the uncertainty within M&S, Coats's largest customer. And it is finally not helped by differences between Sir David and Mr Ost, who is less optimistic about the prospects for textiles than his chairman. Insitutional investors have muttered, darkly, that if Sir David proves a barrier to a radical solution to his problems, he might have to be removed.

It is a dramatic suggestion. But these are troubled times for what used to be a giant of British industry.



Poll position

RUMBLINGS among some members of the Institute of Directors at the feared imposition of a career politician, and a committed europhobe, as director-general once Tim Melville-Ross goes in the summer. Their fears seem exaggerated — internal soundings suggest that the IoD is aware of how unpopular such a move might be — but I hear about five local chairmen are considering an open letter on the point.

John Redwood, seen as a committed europhobe, has apparently been ruled out of the job, but potential internal candidates, such as Ruth Lea, are equally opposed to an early entry to the single currency.

Predictably, not everyone is so firm in its views. "There are a number of us who are very, very unhappy indeed with any outright europhobic stance — or indeed any outright pro-euro stance," says one member.

The IoD would perhaps do itself a favour by polling members on their views. The last such vote was almost three years ago, and it was confusingly worded and inconclusive, say the rebels, with 39 per cent in favour of the single currency.

The IoD says there are no plans for another vote. "We feel that the debate hasn't yet taken place fully." No debate on the euro yet? You have to wonder which newspapers they read.



"Hey wow! The suits have just wiped out 10 per cent of my workforce"

SPEAKING of which, some of our American cousins seem uncertain whether we are in or out of the great project. A British firm in negotiations with an American counterpart received the following e-mail: "We have found that it is better to walk before we run in this area, and either spend or recommend that you spend thousands of pounds (euro's?). Two alternate suggestions . . ."

On side

AS WEMBLEY shareholders gather tomorrow to vote on the company's much-disputed plan to sell Wembley Stadium, I hear that the "vote" of no confidence in Claes Hultman, their chairman, at the weekend was a bit of a foregone conclusion.

In the event, the three rebel directors, Roger Brooke, Peter Mead and Jarvis Astaire, voted against Hultman. This left the six-strong board split, and the casting vote went to . . . the chairman, Claes Hultman.

Examination of Wembley's weird articles of association suggests that none of them needs to have bothered anyway. To remove a director requires a unanimous vote — of all the directors. Not exactly a game of two halves.

BT HAS been taken to task by the Advertising Standards Authority over that rash of adverts saying things like "Staines to Sidcup for 1p", referring to the low cost of making a phone call between those two places. The ASA was less impressed by the small wording at the bottom left hand corner of the poster that says "Minimum charge 5p".

Pop picker

A SURVEY by MORI suggests that Tony Blair and William Hague are less trusted as pensions providers than, for some bizarre reason, Sir Cliff Richard. Something called i.e. group (sic), a financial services business, commissioned the research, and the ageless one came in second only to Howard Davies, head of the Financial Services Authority.

Politicians did really badly, I am glad to say. Alistair Darling, Social Security Secretary, whose job is pensions reform, polled only a handful of votes. His shadow, Iain Duncan-Smith, did even worse, a tie with Vanessa Feltz, no less. And the prince of darkness, Peter Mandelson, was ranked equal with Robert Maxwell.

I KNOW nothing of Ron Suckling and his airline, Suckling Airways, but we can all be encouraged by the news that he will be operating out of London City airport to Dundee four times a day. They do say pigs will fly.

Hard school

GERALD RONSON was unflappable as he hosted the annual Heron lunch at the Savoy yesterday. With £1 billion of European leisure development to celebrate, he even beamed at an off-the-cuff remark from Baroness Denton. She explained why, as a Minister in the last Government, she had no qualms about being posted to Northern Ireland.

After working for Heron, she said, why be afraid of the IRA?

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk





Lady Denton had no qualms about being sent to Northern Ireland

Alasdair Murray examines the Chancellor's Red Book forecasts

Brown's optimistic vision of Britain

THE CHANCELLOR yesterday presented an optimistic vision of the British economy, insisting that it had weathered the storms of last autumn and is on course to return to healthy growth next year.

In the Budget Red Book, Gordon Brown persevered with growth targets, which were last revised in November, despite a growing consensus in the City that GDP growth is only likely to total about half the level anticipated by the Treasury during the coming year.

City analysts were also surprised that Mr Brown appears to have slightly loosened his tight grip on the public finances, with the public sector net cash requirement (PSNCR) now forecast to rise sharply next year, although the Chancellor will remain on course to meet his own borrowing guidelines.

Economists also said that with the Budget apparently boosting consumer spending power, the Bank of England might shy away from further interest rate cuts. However, the fact that Mr Brown has taken action to improve consumer sentiment may help to ensure the economy achieves a soft landing.

Mr Brown stuck rigidly to the forecasts he produced in November, despite recent evidence of a rapid downturn in the economy and the fact that even the Bank of England has reduced its forecast of economic growth to 0.75 per cent this year.

The Treasury is forecasting that growth will total between 1 and 1.5 per cent this year, in line with its November forecasts, before reaching 2.25 per cent to 2.75 per cent in 2000. In contrast, the City consensus is that growth is likely to total just 0.6 per cent this year.

The Treasury, however, appears to have taken on board the full extent of the downturn in the manufacturing sector with the Red Book now forecasting this sector will contract by between 1 and 1.5 per cent during the year, compared with a previous forecast of zero growth. The downgrade is also reflected in the forecasts for the balance of payments deficit that is now expected to balloon to £10 billion this year in contrast to the November estimate of £7.5 billion.

However, the Treasury's forecasts for domestic demand and in particular household and general Government consumption have been upgraded ensuring the Chancellor can stick to his original belief that growth will reach between 1 and 1.5 per cent this year.

While many economists continued to express scepticism that Mr Brown will meet his optimistic forecasts for this year, Neil Parker, economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland, claimed that there is growing evidence the Chancellor may be proved correct.

"I think given the scale of interest rate cuts we've had in the past five or six months, I don't think they're out of range," Mr Parker said.

The City broadly gave support to the Red Book forecasts for public sector borrowing, which are now estimating an improved surplus of £5.2 billion this year, compared with a November estimate of £4.3 billion. In an unexpected move, however, the Chancellor has increased his forecasts for the PSNCR deficit next year from £2 billion to £4.5 billion, which suggests some loosening of fiscal policy.

The Treasury played down the impact of the rise, insisting that with the current budget remaining in surplus over the next few years, overall net borrowing will comfortably meet the Chancellor's borrowing guidelines. Analysts, however, said that the plans were still reliant on the Chancellor meeting his growth forecasts.

Gerard Lyons, UK economist at DKB International, said: "The risk is if the economy turns out to be weaker than the Chancellor expects. If that happens, it would undermine his Budget strategy."

Analysts are especially concerned that the majority of the extra money for tax cuts has been found by a reduction in the estimates of social security payments over the next three years. The Treasury is now predicting that public spending will be £18 billion lower than previously anticipated, although £8 billion of this is already off-set against a lower forecast of tax revenues. About £4 billion of this extra money derives from a decline in debt interest payments as the public finances continue to improve, while £9 billion results from a reduction in the Treasury's contingency funds for rising unemployment.

The Treasury has recently moved from a policy of predicting a stable rate of unemployment to using a consensus of forecasts produced by independent analysts to judge the future course of the labour market. With recent forecasts predicting a less marked rise in unemployment, the Government has been able to reallocate the funds.

SUMMARY OF THE ECONOMIC FORECAST

	1998	PREDICTION 1999	2000	2001
GDP growth (per cent)	2.25	1.0-1.50	2.25-2.75	2.75-3.25
RPIX inflation (per cent)	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50

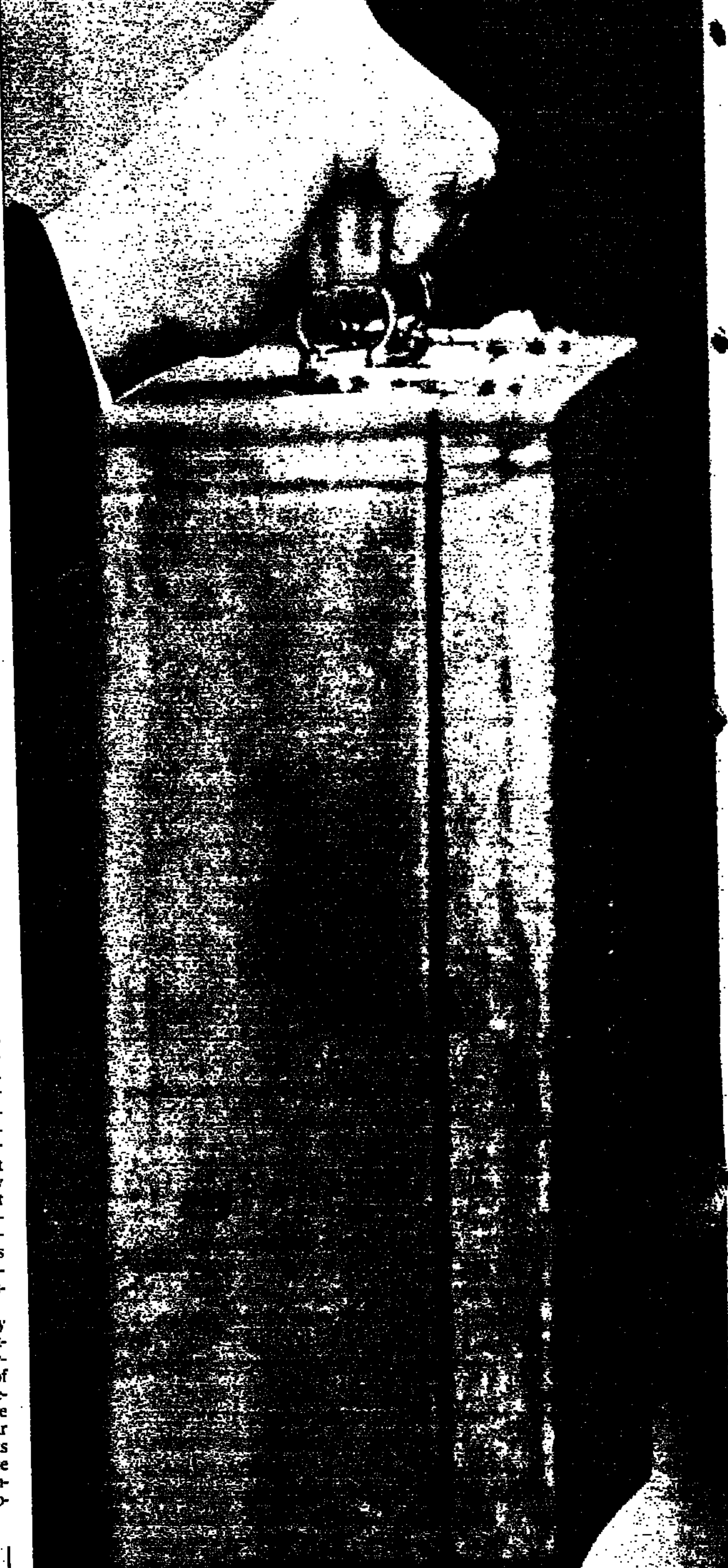
CURRENT AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

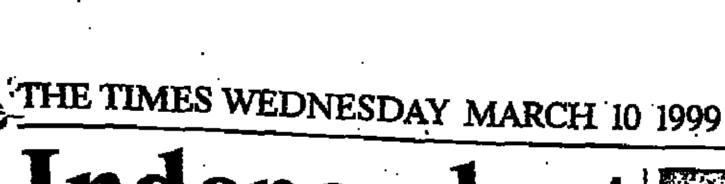
£BILLION

	Outturn 1997-98	Estimate 1998-99	Projections 1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
CURRENT BUDGET							
Current receipts	315.7	334.2	345	364	385	405	425
Current expenditure	304.3	313.5	329	346	362	379	398
Depreciation	14.0	14.6	15	15	16	16	17
Surplus on current budget (including windfall tax)	-2.6	6.2	1	3	7	9	11
Surplus on current budget*	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	8	9	11
CAPITAL BUDGET							
Gross investment	22.0	21.7	24	26	29	32	35
Less asset sales	-4.0	-3.8	-4	-4	-4	-4	-4
Less depreciation	-14.0	-14.6	-15	-15	-16	-16	-17
Net investment	4.0	3.4	5	7	10	12	15
Net borrowing (including windfall tax)	6.6	-2.8	4	5	2	3	4
Net borrowing*	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	3	4
PUBLIC SECTOR NET CASH REQUIREMENT		-5.2	4.5				

*Excluding windfall tax receipts and associated spending

LINKS
WEBSITE:
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk
Weekend Money website:
http://www.times-money.co.uk


Out of the red: Gordon Brown said the current surplus this year is forecast to be £4 billion



Independent Insurance bucks trend with 22% rise

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

SHARES in Independent Insurance recovered by more than 5 per cent yesterday after the company bucked the trend in the insurance market by reporting a 22 per cent increase in underwriting profit.

The shares, which fell sharply last year after the company spoke of difficult trading, rose 14p to 263½p. They peaked at 390p in June 1998.

The increase in underwriting profit to £26.2 million (1997: £21.4 million) was achieved despite adverse trends in the insurance market. Yesterday Michael Bright, chief executive said: "Most participants in the UK insurance market will view 1998 as one of the worst in their memory."

The insurance industry as a whole has been affected by high weather claims and increased price competition and as a result some insurers have seen general insurance profits halved.

Describing 1998 as one of the worst years insurers had seen, Mr Bright unveiled a 5 per cent rise in trading profit to £55.2 million (1997: £52.4 million) and a pre-tax profit of £91.6 million (1997: £82.6 million). This was despite a decline in gross written premiums. Independent said it had withdrawn from business which involved "risks at uncompetitive levels".

Last year the group cancelled ambitious plans to launch into the life and pensions market because of unfavourable market conditions. Yesterday Mr Bright said the company would now concentrate on achieving organic growth in underwriting.

In an upbeat statement on the group's outlook, he said he was confident of a "significant potential to generate strong organic growth" in the future.

Mr Bright said Independent would benefit from staying out of the consolidation sweeping through the insurance sector as its rivals focus on merger integration instead of improving their businesses. He scotched reports that Independent had considered bidding for parts of Guardian Royal Exchange, which is now set to be bought by Sun Life & Provincial.

"Our existing team is fairly small and faced with strong organic growth prospects. We are not likely to get involved in any acquisition opportunities if it would involve using that team," he said.

The total dividend rises to 4p a share from 3.3p last time, with a final 2.5p.

Tempus, page 32



Gloomy forecast: Patrick Pearce, finance director of Country Gardens, the garden centre group that operates in the South East, blamed the British weather for the company's failure to deliver profits in line with expectations. However, despite what the company described as the worst weather for many years, Country Gardens still managed to report a 22 per cent rise in pretax profits to £4.3 million in 1988. Sales at the garden centres grew by 11 per cent to £54 million. Earnings per share, reflecting internal tax changes and a rights issue fell to 10.86p (13.46p). The total dividend for the year is up 16 per cent to 2.15p.

German dole queues grow at slower rate

BY GRAHAM SEARJEANT

COLD weather in Central Europe lengthened Germany's dole queues last month, with official figures showing the country's unemployment rate up from 11.5 per cent to 11.6 per cent in February.

In the former East Germany, 19 per cent of the pupulation is now on the dole. Across the whole country, 4.64 million people are out of work.

Allowing for seasonal adjustments, however, the official jobless total in Europe's biggest economy fell by 6,000, pegging the adjusted unemployment rate back from 10.6 per cent to 10.5 per cent. Forecasters had expected job queues to lengthen by a further 10,000 in the month. This rare piece of good economic news helped to send share prices higher across euroland but led to small falls in bond prices.

Bernhard Jagoda, head of the federal labour office, said unemployment should show a strong seasonal fall in March and average between 4.1 million and 4.2 million over the year.

Continuing high levels of unemployment and contentious tax reforms have intensified recriminations between industry and the new Social Democrat/Green coalition since the key euroland economy was shown unexpectedly to have shrunk by 0.4 per cent in the last quarter of 1998.

The tax reforms mirror changes made several years ago in the UK. They aim to cut the tax burden on lower-paid workers. Industry objects to reforms of company tax, which aim to cut allowances while moving down the formal rate. The effect is to push up corporate taxes, especially for groups such as insurance and power utilities.

Industry groups also complain of increases in wage rates of 4 per cent in engineering and more than 3 per cent in the public sector. Although such rates are low by UK standards, there is virtually no inflation in Germany and the pay trend is one factor behind the standstill in European Central Bank interest rates.

Cantab in plan to undertake fresh trials

BY PAUL DURMAN

CANTAB Pharmaceuticals, which recently acquired two potential vaccines for cocaine and nicotine addiction, hopes to take another four projects into clinical trials this year, taking the total to seven.

The Cambridge company will also begin phase II trials of the genital herpes vaccine it is developing with Glaxo Wellcome and of the genital warts treatment that it is developing with SmithKline Beecham.

Jurek Sikorski, chief executive, said the warts trial will not produce results until late next year, while the herpes trial will not report until early 2001.

With cash of £31.2 million at the end of December, and with an annual cash burn of about £10 million, Cantab has enough funds to see it into 2001. Mr Sikorski continues to seek new licensing opportunities to strengthen its pipeline.

Losses in 1998 grew by £4 million to £7.2 million, largely reflecting a reduction in payments from Glaxo Wellcome. Operating expenses were little changed at £13.8 million.

The cocaine vaccine is already undergoing phase I safety trials while the nicotine vaccine will begin similar studies in the second half.

Dimon gets $30m payoff from Citigroup

FROM ANDREW BUTCHER IN NEW YORK

JAMIE DIMON, sacked as president of Citigroup last November, has walked away from the world's biggest banking and insurance group with a $30 million (£18.75 million) golden handshake.

Mr Dimon, whose dismissal stunned Wall Street observers, was given about $5.6 million in cash, $6.3 million in stock and options worth about $20 million.

As part of the severance package, Mr Dimon, 42, is banned from poaching any Citigroup employees for three years, but he can work for a rival company. Mr Dimon has not taken another job since he was fired.

Mr Dimon had been the protégé and deputy of Sandy Weill, Citigroup's co-chairman, for 16 years before his sudden ousting soon after the Travelers Group and Citibank merged. The pair apparently fell out in 1997 over which position Mr Weill's daughter-in-law should hold in the company.

Details of the package were revealed in annual proxy documents released by Citigroup.

Chasley Lifestyle placed in hands of receivers

BY DOMINIC WALSH

CHASLEY LIFESTYLE, the hotel operator that last year sought a stock market flotation, has been placed in the hands of receivers.

The group's nine hotels are expected to be sold off, although the management of four of them — in Newcastle, Doncaster, Wakefield and Darlington — has already been handed to Friendly Hotels under ten-year operating contracts.

Nick Dargan, one of the receivers from Deloitte & Touche, said that existing plans by Chasley to sell three of the hotels would continue. But he emphasised that all nine, the biggest of which is the Norwich Sport Village, would continue to trade with all staff retained.

The collapse of Chasley, which was founded four years ago by Malcolm Gold and Michael Goletka, comes six months after a boardroom row resulted in the abrupt departure of Mr Gold as chief executive. Mr Gold's previous hotel company, Regal Hotel Group, suffered a similar fate in 1991, although it subsequently rose from the ashes under new management.

Mr Gold said yesterday that he was surprised at the appointment of receivers. He estimated Chasley had assets worth about £25 million while its debts — after the planned disposal of three smaller hotels — were just £11.5 million. "I believe investors should get their money back," he added.

But his claims were at odds with the findings of Mr Dargan, who said: "We are still assessing the outstanding indebtedness, but it is likely there will be a shortfall."

Chasley appointed Shaw & Co, the broker, to handle a £30 million flotation at the end of 1997, shortly after it had acquired five properties from Swallow Hotels for about £12 million. Last summer, it was among the bidders for 30 units put up for sale by Thistle Hotels and eventually sold to Peel Hotels for £63 million.

Adidas sees 13% decline

Adidas-Salomon, the German sportswear company, reported 1998 net profits of DM401 million (£139 million), down 13.4 per cent from the record profits reported in 1997.

Profits were struck before an extraordinary charge of DM723 million related to the acquisition of Salomon, a fellow manufacturer of sports goods, leaving an overall loss of DM322 million.

The Salomon takeover helped to lift group sales almost 48 per cent to DM9.9 billion and operating profits by 22.6 per cent to DM737 million. The 1998 dividend is unchanged at DM1.65 per share.

Safestore warning

Shares of Safestore, the AIM-listed self-storage company, dived more than 20 per cent yesterday as it gave warning that profits for the financial year are going to be significantly below market expectations. The company blamed a significant decline in rental levels at its Croydon site plus the failure to open two new planned sites at Barnet and Southgate in North London on time. The shares fell 11½p to 39½p.

NXT seeks cash

NXT, the loudspeakers company, is raising £13 million by way of a placing of new shares at 461p each. The funds will be used to develop the company's new SoundVu technology and to recruit engineers to cope with growing demand for the service. Existing shares rose 3p to 488p.

Caradon braced for effect of price cuts

By Robert Cole, City Correspondent

CARADON, the radiator manufacturer that sold its Everest double-glazing business last week, admitted yesterday that continuing sales at the group were likely to suffer as it cuts prices on many of its products.

Jürgen Hintz, the chief executive, said it has become necessary to reduce prices on many of its products in order to generate long-term sales growth. However, the short-term effect of lower prices would put pressure on turnover and margins.

A wide-ranging restructuring at Caradon undertaken by Mr Hintz led the company to a £134 million loss last year, compared with pre-tax profits of £129 million in 1997.

Most of the losses were attributable to the accounting treatment of goodwill on companies previously acquired. But the underlying picture also shows declines. Pre-tax profits before exceptional items for the year to December 31 were £115 million compared with £129 million.

The loss per share was 39.1p, compared with earnings of 13.9p the previous year. The total dividend is maintained at 9.5p a share, with an unchanged 6.6p final total payment made last year

Mr Hintz said: "With comparable sales down 4 per cent and group operating profits before restructuring down 11 per cent, the results for 1998 clearly underline the need for the fundamental changes we are driving. We are reshaping Caradon's business portfolio to focus on strong sectors with good market positions and international scope."

Caradon sold Everest for £40 million, and has raised £80 million so far this year from other disposals. A further ten businesses were earmarked for disposal and Caradon has now offloaded six. The goodwill write-offs anounced yesterday cover all expected losses from all disposals expected to take place this year.

Caradon shares, which fell from 395p five years ago to 88p last December, fell 7p to 142½p yesterday.

Tempus, page 32



John Barnes, chairman of Harry Ramsden's, which analysts see as vulnerable to a takeover

Ramsden's in the red

By Dominic Walsh

SHARES in Harry Ramsden's, the fish and chip shop operator, fell yesterday as it reported diving almost £2 million into the red last year.

The £1.97 million pre-tax loss in the year to September 27, after a £1.52 million profit in 1997, was blamed on increased competition in the eating-out market, a 40 per cent rise in fish prices and a £1.6 million hit from selling loss-making restaurants in Oxford and Melbourne, Australia. Total losses from discontinued operations and exceptional items amounted to £2.6 million. Excluding those losses, operating profits dipped from £1.94 million to £1.14 million, with earnings per share down from 15.2p to 5p. There is no final dividend.

The shares, already well down from the 350p achieved early last summer, fell a further 17½p, to 112½p, valuing the group at just £11.5 million. Analysts said that the share collapse had left the group vulnerable to a takeover, although it is not thought to have had any approaches.

John Barnes, chairman, said there had been a "repositioning" away from big restaurants to quick-service kiosks and takeaway outlets.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Polypipe sets sights on acquisitions

POLYPIPE, the diversified building materials group, is preparing to increase its borrowing facilities after having been presented with "several interesting acquisition opportunities". The group, which has traditionally had minimal borrowings, yesterday said it is looking to expand its operations, either in the UK or Europe, by the end of its financial year this June.

James Corr, the finance director, said: "With interest rates at a predictable and manageable level for the first time in several months we feel comfortable borrowing cash to expand our business." Polypipe, itself the subject of overseas bid rumours, is currently thought to be considering an offer for its rival, Avonside Group, which is valued at about £23 million. In the six months to December 31 Polypipe returned pre-tax profits little changed at £12.2 million (£12 million) on sales of £122.2 million (£119.6 million). Profits were adversely affected by £1 million of costs from new product launches. The interim dividend rises to 1.2p (1.03p). Earnings were 4.99p a share (4.8p). The shares fell 7p to 135p.

GEO losses increase

GEO Interactive Media, the Internet software developer saw losses in 1998 widen to $17.5 million (£10.8 million) from £9.8 million the previous year as the company blamed a drop in revenue from product shipment delays and phasing out of the retail market for its Emblaze product. But Naftali Shani, chairman of the Israeli company, quoted in London, said the company was well placed after a year of "dramatic shifts and turmoil" in its markets. The shares fell 4½p to 48½p having dropped from a 12-month high of 181p.

Expamet advances

EXPAMET, the engineer that supplies the building and industrial markets, yesterday reported that profits for 1998 were up 21 per cent, and that with a programme of overhead reductions successfully implemented, profits should continue to improve this year. Pre-tax profits came in at £11.8 million on sales up 7 per cent to £119.5 milion. Earnings per share rose to 13.35p (10.41p), while the final dividend is up to 2.55p, making a total of 4.5p for the year, an increase of 17 per cent on 1997.

Goodwin makes plea

SIR MATTHEW GOODWIN, chairman of Crestacare, the long-term healthcare group, said health authorities will have to reverse their policy of emphasising academic qualifications in nursing and concentrating on traditional in-house training to attract trainees and resolve long-term staff shortages in the sector. Sir Matthew made his plea as the company reported pre-tax profits before exceptionals for 1998 of £5.5 million (£5.4 million). Earnings per share remain at 2.1p while an increased final dividend of 0.73p makes a total of 1.06p (1p).

Burford's triple buy

BURFORD HOLDINGS, the property investment company, is acquiring a portfolio of three retail properties from Hermes for £89 million. The portfolio comprises Fishergate shopping centre, Preston, and two retail warehouse parks, the Phase II Tunnel Retail Park in West Thurrock, Essex, and the Euro Retail Park in Ipswich. They provide 620,000 sq ft of retail space. Annual rental income is £5.95 million, which is expected to rise to £6.6 million. The consideration reflects a net initial yield of 7.1 per cent on completion of outstanding rent reviews.

Yule Catto 'resilient' despite trade outlook

By Martin Barrow

YULE CATTO, the chemicals and building products company, remains defiant in the face of difficult trading conditions after achieving record profits in 1998.

Lord Catto of Cairncatto, chairman, said many markets are currently experiencing recessionary conditions. However, he remained confident about the outlook for the company.

"As a group we are well accustomed to operating in relatively hostile trading environments and our past performance emphasises the resilience of our management and activities in sustaining growth through difficult periods," Lord Catto said.

Yesterday the company reported a rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £41.27 million from £38 million in the previous 12 months.

Adjusted earnings were 26.8p a share, up from 24.4p previously. A 6.6p final dividend lifts the total to 11p from 10p.

Yesterday the shares fell 2½p to 285½p.

Profits were struck after amortisation of goodwill amounting to £9.7 million. There were also non-recurring costs of £4.6 million, including restructuring costs after last year's acquisition of Holliday Chemical Holdings.

Boost for customers as banks join Link

By Caroline Merrell

MILLIONS of banking customers will have easier access to their money after the announcement yesterday that three of the UK's biggest banks are to join the Link cash machine network

Barclays, Lloyds and Midland yesterday announced their intention to join Link.

This means that all the biggest high street banks will now be on the network, which will have about 25,000 outlets nationwide. Barclays has already connected its 3,200 cash machines to Link. Midland and Lloyds are to join the network very shortly. John Hardy, Link chief executive, said: "When the final two banks are connected to Link, we will have one single network of cash machines. This will make access to cash significantly more convenient for the customer."

Others on the network include NatWest, Abbey National, Bank of Scotland, Royal Bank of Scotland, Alliance & Leicester and Woolwich.

Despite most UK banks now being on the network, some banks still charge for use of cash machines. According to recent research, 75 per cent of cash transactions carry no charge. However, Abbey National will charge on some accounts, as will the Alliance & Leicester. NatWest charges 60p for withdrawals.







BBA focuses on higher-growth hygiene market

By Paul Durman

BBA GROUP, the materials and aircraft servicing group, believes the higher-growth hygiene markets are about to become an increasingly important part of its business making non-woven textiles.

The company on Monday announced plans to invest $50 million (£31 million) in a plant to make feminine hygiene pads in Tianjin, China. Roberto Quarta, chief executive, said this would create sales of $50 million a year to an important customer segment.

BBA believes that medical and hygiene sales will grow from about half to 75 per cent of its £490 million non-woven business over the next few years. These activities include making the material used in babies' nappies.

The group's pre-tax profits from its material technology businesses — which also include brake components — increased from £97.9 million to £118 million. This enabled the group to improve its underlying pre-tax profits for 1998 by 7 per cent to £165.1 million. Restructuring costs were covered by a £25.3 million profit on the sale of businesses.

On continuing operations, operating profit was 21 per cent stronger at £168.9 million.

The non-woven business grew 15 per cent, or 6 per cent after stripping out acquisitions that included Veratec, the US company bought for £160.7 million last July. Mr Quarta believes 8 per cent organic growth should be possible this year.

Friction materials grew only 3 per cent, held back by weak demand from Rover and other UK customers. BBA hopes to see an increasing benefit from after-market sales this year.

BBA's network of 53 aircraft servicing operations in the US enabled the aviation division to increase profits from £42.1 million to £50.9 million. In the past year, the business has been strengthened by the acquisitions of H&S Aviation in the UK. More recently in the US, BBA bought UNC Airwork for £35.5 million and AMR Combs for £105.6 million.

Mr Quarta said that BBA is now able to offer a one-stop shop for aircraft fuelling, servicing and repairs. He expects continued growth from the aviation business this year.

Basic earnings per share rose 10 per cent to 26.1 p. BBA is paying a final dividend of 6.15p to increase the total 10 per cent to 8.8p a share.

Mr Quarta said: "We believe the repositioning of BBA over the last five years to focus on services with a considerably higher consumable and after-market content has resulted in a group with a substantially more robust and well-balanced international business portfolio."



Terry Garthwaite, left, Senior finance director, and Andrew Parrish announced a profit rise

Senior plans to engineer further growth

By Matthew Barbour

SENIOR ENGINEERING plans to continue its acquisition drive during 1999 with funds raised from a series of non-core disposals in its engineered products and services (EPS) division.

Disposals could raise up to £100 million, with the proceeds used to finance acquisitions in its core Flextronics division, which last year contributed 86 per cent of group operating profits.

Although the EPS division has assets of only £50 million, Andrew Parrish, the chief executive, insists that an improving profits profile is likely to build a sizeable premium into the price any potential buyer would be willing to pay. Last year the division more than doubled operating profits to £7.4 million (£3.1 million) on sales of £150 million.

Mr Parrish said: "We have an ambitious expansion programme and expect to spend a similar amount on deals and capital expenditure going forward," he said. Senior has significant borrowing facilities with more than 12 times' interest cover on year-end gearing of 51 per cent. The group has ruled out any need to call on shareholders for cash through a rights issue.

Last year Senior spent £67.5 million on nine acquisitions, including Jet Products, an American parts supplier to both Boeing and Airbus, which it bought for £33.7 million.

"We still see major expansion opportunities for us in Japan and Asia," he said.

Yesterday Senior posted full-year, pre-tax profits up 14.8 per cent to £49.5 million on turnover of £489.1 million (£473.7 million). The Flextronics division, which makes flexible metal tubing and ducting for cars, aircraft, satellites and machines, saw operating profits rise 14.9 per cent to £44.7 million on sales up 9.9 per cent at £361.7 million. The total dividend is being stepped up from 4.24p to 4.69p per share. Fully diluted earnings rose 15.4 per cent to 11.54p (10.44p). The shares rose 4p to 141p.

RSA properties sold for £392m

By Saeed Shah

ROYAL & SunAlliance, (RSA) the insurance group, yesterday announced the sale of 75 properties for £392 million to Moorfield Capital Partners (MCP).

MCP is a new limited partnership set up by Moorfield Estates, a property investment company. Moorfield will invest £12 million for a 25 per cent stake in MCP, financed by a one-for-three open offer of shares at 28p, underwritten by RSA, which could leave the insurer with up to 25 per cent of Moorfield's enlarged issued ordinary share capital. Yesterday, Moorfield shares closed up 3½p at 26p.

The remaining 75 per cent of MCP will be taken up by other partners, which have yet to be identified.

RSA will receive £332 million in cash, and a £60 million vendor loan note. The buyer has arranged a £282 million non-recourse debt facility.

The insurer said that it would use the cash raised from the sale for "general investment purposes". Last week, RSA announced that it would give back £750 million to shareholders, at the same time as reporting a 39 per cent slump in 1998 profits to £602 million.

Bob Mendelsohn, chief executive, said RSA had finally completed its reorganisation after the merger of Royal Insurance and Sun Alliance three years ago and was now determined to use shareholders' capital more efficiently.

Analysts said RSA was reducing solvency capital by moving its exposure from property and equities to less volatile assets such as bonds. The properties bought by MCP produce a gross rental income of £35.9 million, with a gross yield of 9.1 per cent.

Readymix turns in profit rise

By Carl Mortished

THE Irish economic boom is keeping the concrete mixers turning in the Republic and generating more business for Readymix, which saw its pretax profit gain 15 per cent to Ir£14.5 million (£12.5 million) in the year to December.

High levels of construction activity in the Republic of Ireland boosted sales by 10 per cent to Ir£124 million with housebuilding dominating the sector. Readymix said yesterday that construction output was strong in all sectors of the economy except agriculture, and margins were maintained.

In contast, sales in Northern Ireland were flat with weaker profits. Severe price competition is hurting margins in the region after cutbacks in infrastructure spendings.

Readymix is proposing to raise the total dividend for the year 17 per cent to Ir3.11p.

Wilson Connolly buoyant

By Christine Buckley

WILSON CONNOLLY, the housebuilder, is forecasting a strong market this year, with the average selling price of its houses expected to climb to £90,000, 14 per cent above the figure for 1998.

Ian Black, chief executive, said the market was "more buoyant than we might have dared hope just a few months ago". The company believes cheaper mortgages will offset fears over the global economic climate.

With the company's order book 5 per cent ahead on last year, the rise in house prices means that its forward sales position is 20 per cent ahead.

Pre-tax profit for the year to December 31 rose 17 per cent to £44.5 million, while earnings per share climbed 18 per cent to 15.5p. The final dividend, due on June 1, was set at 4.45p giving a total of 6.05p — 10 per cent up on 1998.

Modest gains at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

BANKS

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

BUILDING MATERIALS

CHEMICALS

CONSTRUCTION

DISTRIBUTORS

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

ELECTRICITY

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

HEALTHCARE

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

INSURANCE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

LEISURE & HOTELS

MEDIA

MINING

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OTHER FINANCIAL

PHARMACEUTICALS

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TRANSPORT

WATER

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

LONGS (over 15 years)

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Court of Appeal

Law Report March 10 1999

Bankrupt's tenancy a form of property

Rothschild and Others v Bell (a Bankrupt) and Another

Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Mummery and Lord Justice Buxton

[Judgment February 18]

Where residential premises were let to joint tenants on a long lease at a low rent, the fact that only one of the joint tenants remained in occupation on the date the lease expired by effluxion of time did not preclude that tenant from claiming security of tenure and remaining in possession by virtue of Part I of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

Where the remaining tenant was a bankrupt, that right to remain in possession was a form of "property" within the meaning of section 283(1)(a) of the Insolvency Act 1986, and was thus capable of forming part of his estate and vesting in his trustee in bankruptcy.

If the trustee then elected to disclaim it, the bankrupt had no further right to possession of the premises.

The Court of Appeal so held when allowing an appeal by the plaintiff landlords, Sir Evelyn Robert Adrian de Rothschild and others, against the decision of Judge Medawar, QC, sitting at Central London County Court, on certain preliminary issues arising in a dispute with the first defendant, Russell Paul Bell, regarding his tenancy of premises at 11 Bryanston Mews East, Oxford Street, London.

A 40-year lease of the premises, dating from December 25, 1956, was assigned to the defendants, Mr Bell and his wife, as joint tenants in 1982. They were divorced in 1984, and the second defendant had not lived at the premises since September 1983.

The first defendant was still resident when the contractual term expired on December 25, 1996. He was declared bankrupt on January 14, 1997 and by section 306 of the Insolvency Act 1986, his estate automatically vested in the Official Receiver. On May 22, 1997, the Official Receiver disclaimed the lease.

The issues raised in these circumstances were:

1 Did the first defendant have any right to remain in the premises after the determination date?

2 If so, what was the nature of that right?

3 If it was a right held by the first defendant alone and not as a joint tenant, was it part of his estate for the purposes of section 283(1)(a) of the 1986 Act?

The judge declared that the lease did not determine for all purposes on the determination date: and that neither the lease nor any interest therein formed or was capable of forming part of the first defendant's estate so as to vest in his trustee in bankruptcy.

Mr Edwin Johnson for the landlords; Miss J. Baker for the first defendant.

LORD JUSTICE BUXTON said the lease having determined by effluxion of time, the only right to remain must be found in provisions for statutory protection.

On the determination date, the lease was a tenancy at a low rent as defined in section 5 of the Rent Act 1977 and therefore not a protected tenancy under section 1 of that Act.

Accordingly, the first defendant had no right to remain in the premises unless he came within Part I of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

His Lordship referred to sections 1 to 4, 6 and 12 of the 1954 Act, as amended by section 117(2) of and Schedule 15 to the Rent Act 1968 and section 155 of and paragraph 15 of Schedule 23 to the Rent Act 1977.

The landlords argued that those provisions of Part I of the 1954 Act did not apply to a case where the contractual tenancy was held by joint tenants but only one of them was residing at the premises when the tenancy expired by effluxion of time.

That was the position in respect of the continuation tenancy provided by Part II of the 1954 Act in relation to business premises: see *Jacobs v Chaudhuri* ([1968] 2 QB 471).

Parts I and II of the 1954 Act adopted the same approach in relation to residential and business tenancies respectively, its characteristics being:

(i) the continuation of the contractual tenancy beyond its term date:

(ii) a continuation period or tenancy, during which the parties could, or according to their requirements were obliged to, take steps to regulate their future relations; and

(iii) according to the circumstances, the creation by operation of law of a new tenancy relationship at the end of the continuation period.

While acknowledging those similarities, his Lordship regarded the differences as more significant. Under Part II what was continued was indeed the contractual tenancy; but under Part I, while the terms of the tenancy remained the same, the premises would not necessarily be the demised premises but only that part which, being occupied as a residence, qualified for protection.

Moreover, under Part II, the new tenancy would be just that, a further tenancy in the same form as a contractual tenancy and subject to the same legal regime. But under Part I, the tenant became entitled not to a new tenancy but to the protection of the Rent Acts. The result was a statutory, not a contractual, tenancy.

That difference was attributable to the purpose of Part I of the 1954 Act, which was to bring persons occupying residential property on long leases at a low rent within the regime of the Rent Acts.

Jacobs v Chaudhuri was not followed in *Lloyd v Sadler* ([1978] 1 QB 774) in which it was held that, in relation to residential premises, the phrase "the tenant" in section 3(1)(a) of the Rent Act 1968, whose provisions were now incorporated in the 1977 Act, could include one of two joint tenants who remained after the other had left. That meant the remaining tenant was entitled to statutory protection.

The following principles should be applied with regard to the protection conferred by Rent Act tenancies.

1 Regard must be had to the purpose of the legislation, which was to protect the interests of residential occupiers.

2 The effect of the creation or continuation of protection under the Rent Acts was not, in contrast to Part II of the 1954 Act, to create a further contractual tenancy, but rather to create rights that were not founded on the grant but arose collaterally to it by operation of statute. What was protected was persons and not legal concepts.

In the present case, the judge was correct in holding that the lease did not determine for all purposes on the determination date, in the sense that the effluxion of the contractual lease did not give the landlords a right to possession of the premises.

As to the second issue, the nature of the first defendant's right did not spring from his legal status under the contractual tenancy but from his status as a residential occupier holding over, and as such was a right held by him alone and not as a joint tenant.

That status was of a particular and hybrid nature, to which the language of tenancy was applied by the statute because he remained in contractual relations with the landlord, but which differed from his contractual relations under the lease itself.

The status was to be spelled out of the combination of the terms of Part I of the 1954 Act and its incorporation of the policy and requirements of the 1977 Act.

On the third and final issue, as to whether the first defendant's right to remain in possession was "property" which was capable of forming and did form part of his estate, and thus vested in the trustee in bankruptcy, his Lordship differed from the judge.

Section 283(1)(a) of the Insolvency Act 1983 defined a bankrupt's estate as "all property belonging to or vested in the bankrupt at the commencement of the bankruptcy".

The judge found himself able to take the first defendant's interest outside those very wide words by reference to the fact that a statutory Rent Act tenancy could not form part of a bankrupt's estate.

That was decided in *Sutton v Dorf* ([1932] 2 KB 304, 306) on the footing that in *Nunn v Pellegrini* ([1924] 1 KB 685) it was held that "the right of a statutory tenant is merely a personal right to retain possession of the premises, and cannot be assigned".

In his Lordship's judgment, the first and crucial issue under section 283 was whether the interest or right was, in juristic terms, "property". If so, it fell outside the bankrupt's estate only by some specific exclusion.

That in practical terms the property when held by a bankrupt might be of no value to the creditors was irrelevant. The issue was of the general nature of the right created by Part I of the 1954 Act and not of its value in the particular circumstances.

The continuation tenancy had clear incidents of a property nature, in particular because it retained from the contractual tenancy the character of assignability: see the concluding parts of sections 3(2)(a) and (b) of the 1954 Act.

Second, even if one had to consider the value of the right in the hands of a bankrupt, it was not clear that a continuation tenancy could never have value in the hands of a trustee in bankruptcy, so as to disqualify it from being a component in the bankrupt's estate.

It followed that a continuation tenancy was part of the bankrupt's estate under section 283 of the 1986 Act with the result that the first defendant's interest in this case was lawfully disclaimed by his trustee and he therefore had no further right to possession of the premises.

On that point the appeal should be allowed.

Lord Justice Mummery and Lord Justice Hirst agreed.

Solicitors: Radcliffes; Wedlake Bell.

Court of Appeal

Majority cannot force minority to sell

Morris and Others v Hateley and Another

Before Lord Justice Roch, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Henry

[Judgment February 18]

Majority shareholders in a company who had the power to procure the passing of any resolution of the company and so could bring to an end any prejudicial state of affairs in the company and in fact had done so by stopping a minority shareholder from conducting any of the company's affairs, were not entitled to bring a petition under section 459 of the Companies Act 1985 to force the minority shareholder to give up his investment.

The Court of Appeal so stated when dismissing an appeal against an order of Mr Peter Goldsmith, QC, sitting as a deputy judge in the Chancery Division, on June 3, 1998 striking out the petition of Geoffrey Vernon Morris, Samir Kumar Thaker and Paul Ian Turner brought pursuant to section 459 of the 1985 Act.

In early 1995, Mr Morris, Mr Thaker and Mr Turner, formed a partnership which Mr Brian Hateley joined later that year.

A company, Legal Costs Negotiators Ltd, was incorporated in 1995 and when the partnership ceased trading its assets were transferred to the company which carried on the partnership's former business.

Each man held 25 per cent of the shares in the company. Each was a director and employee.

In 1997 Mr Hateley was dismissed from his employment and resigned as director. He remained the holder of 25 per cent of the shares.

The petitioners, who were the majority shareholders in Legal Costs Negotiators, sought an order compelling Mr Hateley to transfer or sell his shares. Mr Hateley successfully applied to strike out their petition.

Mr Matthew Collings for the petitioners; Miss Laura Garcia-Miller for Mr Hateley; Legal Costs Negotiators did not appear and was not represented.

LORD JUSTICE PETER GIBSON said that the issue raised was whether the majority shareholders had a sustainable case for obtaining relief under sections 459 and 461 of the 1985 Act against the holder of the remaining 25 per cent of the shares.

Relying on *In re Saul D Harrison and Sons plc* ([1995] 1 BCLC 14, 22), the judge scrutinised the allegations in the petition with care. He drew two points of significance for the case from the authorities.

The first was that the starting point was to consider what the parties had agreed between themselves as their commercial relationship, although he recognised that that need not always be contained in the articles of association.

The second was that the essence of the powers under section 459 was to give a remedy where there was complaint about the way the company's affairs were being conducted through the use of, or failure to use powers in relation to the conduct of the company's affairs provided by its constitution.

He regarded the section as concerned with the company's affairs rather than the affairs of individuals and to be concerned with acts done by the company or those authorised to act as its organs.

He found that the cases showed a reluctance by the court to act where the petitioner was able to control the relevant conduct by his own powers and that the cases where relief was granted were concerned with situations in which the petitioner was otherwise powerless to stop the conduct by powers which he had under the company's constitution.

That was consistent with the section being generally regarded as for the protection of minorities. He expressly said that he did not suggest that there could never be a case which did not have the characteristics he had attempted to identify, and recognized the deliberate flexibility of the remedy provided by the section, but expected that such cases would be exceptional.

Judged by reference to those considerations, the petitioners' case was bound to fail. He said that the complaint was not about the way the company's affairs were being conducted, but that Mr Hateley was holding on to his own investment in the company.

There was nothing in the articles of association to require Mr Hateley to sell his shares if the petitioners did not want him to continue as an employee or director.

The judge dismissed the petitioners' case on previous conduct. The petitioners were able to exercise their own remedy of terminating his employment and bringing about his resignation as director.

It was possible but unlikely that serious mismanagement could constitute prejudice but the prospect that a court would consider it appropriate to act to require him to sell his shares against his will when the petitioners had already remedied the mischief was so remote.

Before their Lordships, Mr Collings had, inter alia, stressed the width of the jurisdiction and the relief that could be granted. Like the judge, his Lordship would lay emphasis on the need to show that it was the affairs of the company which were being or had been conducted in an unfairly prejudicial manner or that it was an act or omission of the company that was or would be so prejudicial.

Further, his Lordship would emphasis the limit imposed by statute on the relief which could be given under section 461, namely, the order was for giving relief in respect of the matters complained of.

The court on an application to strike out a section 459 petition could look at the realities of the case.

It was entitled to take the pragmatic view that the petition should not be allowed to proceed where the likelihood of the trial judge exercising his discretion to grant the claimed relief was so remote that the case could be described as perfectly hopeless.

In his Lordship's judgment, the judge was justified in saying that section 459 was essentially directed at cases where powers in relation to the conduct of a company's affairs had been abused or there had been an unfairly prejudicial omission to use powers.

In *Harrison*, Lord Justice Hoffmann gave guidance (at pp18 to 20) on the starting point in section 459 cases, directing attention first to the articles of association and to the powers of directors and of the company in general meeting.

The judge recognised that in a quasi-partnership company, legitimate expectations could exist and could render the use of, or the failure to use powers unfairly prejudicial to the interests of members, but in the present case there were no relevant powers which would enable the petitioners to require the sale or transfer by Mr Hateley of his shares nor did the pleaded expectation give rise to an entitlement to such a sale or transfer.

The present case was clearly one where the petitioners by reason of their ownership of 75 per cent of the shares always had the power to procure the passing of any resolution of the company and so could bring to an end any prejudicial state of affairs in the company and in fact did so by stopping Mr Hateley from conducting any of the company's affairs.

They were not entitled to bring a section 459 petition to force him as a minority shareholder to give up his investment.

The appeal would be dismissed.

Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Roch agreed.

Solicitors: Dibb Lupton Alsop, Liverpool; Lees Lloyd Whitley.

Missing beneficiary insurance recommended

Evans v Westcombe

Before Mr Richard McCombe, QC

[Judgment January 28]

Personal representatives, especially of small estates, should not be discouraged from obtaining missing beneficiary insurance policy, which to some extent was more effective than the costlier *Benjamin* order procedure ([1902] 1 Ch 723) and was preferable to allowing sizeable sums to be tied up indefinitely for fear of the re-emergence of a long-lost beneficiary. That was so even when the personal representative was also beneficially entitled to a share of the estate.

Mr Richard McCombe, QC, sitting as a deputy Chancery Division judge, so held in a reserved judgment allowing in part the claim of the plaintiff, David Ari Evans, for various accounts and inquiries in respect of the administration of the estate of David Kenneth Evans, deceased, by the defendant, Lilian Milona Westcombe.

Miss Anna Clarke for the plaintiff; Mr Henry Legge for the defendant.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the plaintiff and defendant were the children of David Kenneth Evans deceased, who died intestate on October 18, 1987. Letters of administration were granted to the defendant on May 24, 1988.

Subject to administration, the defendant held the deceased's estate upon the statutory trusts for the deceased's issue by operation of section 46(1)(ii) of the Administration of Estates Act 1925.

The plaintiff claimed compensation for lost interest from 1990 to date and took issue, inter alia, with the defendant's claim that the cost of the missing beneficiary insurance premium was an expense of the administration.

The defendant was born on August 11, 1946 and the plaintiff on October 7, 1949. The deceased and his wife separated shortly after the plaintiff's birth. Following a violent incident involving the plaintiff and the defendant in 1959, the defendant was sent to boarding school and spent the holidays with friends or her grandparents.

In 1962 all contact between the defendant, her grandparents and the parties' mother ceased. From that time onwards the defendant did not see or hear from her mother. She did not hear from the plaintiff again until 1994.

When the time came for distribution of the deceased's estate in 1990, the plaintiff was assumed to have died. On the advice of her solicitors, a missing beneficiary insurance policy was taken out in a sum equal to approximately half the asset value of the estate and the estate was distributed to the defendant.

Miss Clarke contended that the insurance policy was purchased to facilitate an excessive distribution from the estate to the defendant herself while protecting her from a breach of trust claim.

Mr Legge pointed out that the defendant could properly have applied to the court for directions and/or a *Benjamin* order which would have protected the personal representative, although not the beneficiary whose share had been wrongly augmented at the expense of the late claimant, at far greater expense to the estate. The policy had cost only £525.

His Lordship said personal representatives of small estates should not be discouraged from seeking practical solutions to difficult administration problems without the expense of recourse to the court.

Missing beneficiary indemnity insurance offered a fund to meet the claim of the beneficiary in exoneration of the personal representative and/or overpaid beneficiary, and to some extent was more effective than the costlier *Benjamin* order procedure.

The court was disinclined to restrict the personal representative's recourse to insurance to cases where the personal representative was not beneficially entitled.

The plaintiff should have received £22,053.97 by the end of September 1990. In fact he received only £20,900 under the policy.

Applying *Bartlett v Barclays Bank Trust Co Ltd (No 2)* ([1980] Ch 515, 547), the plaintiff was prima facie entitled to interest at the special account rate, between 8 and 14.5 per cent, on unpaid capital during the relevant period.

The defendant claimed relief from the plaintiff's claim for interest pursuant to section 61 of the Trustee Act 1925. What to do where no one in the family had any idea of the whereabouts of a potential beneficiary for thirty years was as much a matter for technical legal guidance as the correct construction of a will.

Acting on legal advice was not of itself a passport to relief under section 61: see *Re Allsop* ([1914] 1 Ch 1) and *Marsden v Regan* ([1954] 1 WLR 423, 434-5).

However, the court must have regard to the nature of the estate, the circumstances of the defaulting representative and his or her actions in the light of the advice received.

This was a relatively small estate. The personal representative was unaccustomed to problems of this nature and was at all times willing to abide by the advice of solicitors. That advice led to some provision being made for the plaintiff's claims.

It would be wrong not to satisfy the plaintiff's claim to the extent that it was capable of being realised out of a property derived from the deceased's estate which was still at the disposal of the defendant.

The defendant was to be relieved against the plaintiff's claim for interest to the extent that such claim could not be satisfied out of the proceeds of sale of that property.

Solicitors: Wolferstans, Plymouth; Simmonds Church Smiles.

● *Reprints of* Times Law Reports *in monthly parts and annual bound volumes from 1990 are available from T & T Clark Ltd, 59 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2LQ (Tel: 0131 225 4703; Fax: 0131 220 4260).*

Description not identification

Regina v Byron

Evidence of a factually descriptive nature which in the context of other evidence in a case was highly probative did not make it evidence of identification.

Where the prosecution was unable to call identification evidence because of its failure to hold an identification parade, that did not prevent it from calling descriptive evidence.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division (Lord Justice Auld, Mr Justice Forbes and Mr Justice Steel) so held on February 12 when dismissing an appeal by Darren Byron against his conviction before Mr Justice Astill on February 10, 1998 at Nottingham Crown Court of murder, causing grievous bodily harm with intent and assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

LORD JUSTICE AULD said that the appellant had brutally assaulted four children of Sylvia Blench, with whom he was living, eventually killing her daughter aged 2½.

Evidence was given describing a man with a large tattoo on his upper left arm striking two of the children.

As the appellant was one of only two adult males living in the house, the evidence, which was descriptive, was of elimination and not identification.

The case was close to *R v Kelly* (*The Times* February 23, 1998) where for want of an identification parade the prosecution relied on descriptive evidence of the assailant and, as it was consistent with the defendant's appearance, Lord Justice Potter had said it was plainly a fact the jury could take into account.

Scots Law Report March 10 1999 Outer House

Planning gain not unlawful where infrastructure clearly necessary

Lothian Borders and Angus Co-operative Society Ltd v Scottish Borders Council

Before Lord Milligan

[Judgment December 18]

A challenge to the decision of a planning authority on the ground of bias based on benefit to the authority through planning gain was not well founded where the infrastructure works undertaken by the applicants were clearly substantially required for the development.

In considering the location of a retail development a planning authority must have regard to the sequential test adumbrated in the National Policy Planning Guidelines *Town Centre and Retailing* issued in 1997 (NPPG 8), but the weight to be attached to it was a matter for the authority in the particular circumstances of the particular case.

In dealing with an application for planning permission it was not unlawful for a planning authority to grant full planning permission for roads external to the site of a proposed development, reserving the question of the approval of the principal development for detailed permission later.

Lord Milligan so held in the Outer House of the Court of Session, dismissing a petition brought by Lothian Borders and Angus Co-operative Society Ltd seeking judicial review of a decision of Scottish Borders Council. The petition was also served on Trinity Investments Ltd and Nicodent Ltd as having an interest and they entered the process as second and third respondents.

Mr Neil Brailsford, QC, for the co-operative society; Mr Patrick Hodge, QC and Mr John Speir for the council; Mr David Connal for Trinity Investments; Mr Roy Martin, QC, for Nicodent.

LORD MILLIGAN said that the petitioners sought review of a decision of the planning authority to grant conditional planning permission for a supermarket development in Galashiels.

The petitioners also had a supermarket in Galashiels. They submitted that if a planning authority was considering an application concerning land in which it had a pecuniary interest it had to be particularly scrupulous in the way in which it dealt with that application.

In the present case, the planning authority had a pecuniary interest.

In *Steeples v Derbyshire County Council* ([1985] 1 WLR 256), a county council owned a site which they proposed to develop as a leisure centre. They undertook by agreement with a company which was to manage the development that they would undertake to use their best endeavours to obtain outline planning permission, with a financial penalty if they failed to do so.

The planning committee was not informed of the financial arrangements but a neighbour was held to have a proprietary interest to challenge the grant of permission and to have sound grounds for doing so, in that the grant, while fairly and properly made, had not been in accordance with natural justice, because a reasonable man, not present when the decision was made and unaware that in fact it had been fairly made, but aware of the terms of council's agreement with the company, would think that there was a real likelihood that the agreement had had a material and significant effect on the planning authority.

Mr Justice Webster's test of what a reasonable man in the defined circumstances would consider was satisfied in the present case and planning permission should be set aside.

The first respondents submitted that the *Steeples* case involved circumstances very different to those in the present case. They made reference to *R v Sevenoaks District Council, Ex parte Terry* ([1985] 3 All ER 226), in which Mr Justice Glidewell referred to the *Steeples* case and said:

"The correct test to be applied [is]: had the council acted in such a way that it is clear that, when the committee came to consider [the] application for planning permission, it could not exercise proper discretion?

"... It is, in my judgment, neither necessary nor desirable for the court to go further and consider what the opinion of a reasonable man would be ... In so far as this formulation differs from that adopted by Webster J in *Steeples v Derbyshire CC*, I respectfully disagree with him."

Accordingly, in the first respondents' submission it was for the challenger to show that the council had acted in such a way that it was clear that it could not exercise proper discretion. His Lordship agreed.

The petitioners also argued that planning agreements made under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 should be related in scale and kind to the proposed development.

The road works element was 15 per cent of the total cost of the development. There was a disproportionate benefit to the first respondent in respect of the excess of financing of road works by the developer.

His Lordship did not consider that the petitioners' general allegation of improper motive had been shown to have any substance.

He accepted the first respondent's submission that the suggested improper motive related to the extent to which the applicants undertook to meet the cost of external road, bridge and underpass works, the impropriety arising from the costs concerned allegedly not being required substantially for the development, it not being in issue that they were not required wholly for the development.

They were clearly substantially required for the development whatever the position would have been had there been no development.

The petitioners said that NPPG 8 had been issued in March 1997. The need for a sequential approach by planning authorities in selecting sites for new retail developments was set out there.

First preference should be given for town centre sites, followed by edge of centre sites, followed only then by out of town centre sites. The council had ignored or avoided NPPG 8.

In his Lordship's opinion, so far as the application of the test was concerned, the weight to be attached to the test was very much a matter for the committee in the particular circumstances of the particular case.

Such a consideration as difficulty in achieving retail development on a particular town centre site or advantage of an edge of town site, or of being close to a bus station were examples of factors which it would be perfectly proper for the committee to take into account in deciding the weight to be attached to the sequential test.

A late contention for the petitioners related to the very nature of the grant actually made.

The application resulted in detailed grant so far as road works external to the site were concerned but comprised only permission in principle for the development of the proposed food store, the store building to be within the footprint for that building shown in the plan.

It seemed to his Lordship that it was eminently sensible that the matter be dealt with in that way. So far as the external road works were concerned, it being possible to deal with the grant of planning permission on the basis of detailed permission it was clearly sensible that it should happen.

It was of assistance to all parties to whom the detail of the road works was of material practical significance. No actual food store could be constructed until detailed planning permission therefor had been obtained.

No prohibition against the first respondents proceeding in that way was identified in submissions.

There was no substance in the contention that the grant was some way unlawful.

Law agents: Dundas & Wilson, CS; A. & W. M. Urquhart; McGrigor Donald; Semple Fraser, WS.

Oil spill claim was made out of time

Gray and Another v Braer Corporation and Others

Before Lord Gill

[Judgment December 29]

Section 9 of the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution) Act 1971 created one prescriptive period of three years applicable to all claims, with a long-stop provision that after the elapse of six years from the date of the relevant occurrence no action could be brought to enforce any claim whether for losses already sustained or for losses apprehended.

Lord Gill, sitting in the Outer House of the Court of Session, so held, refusing a motion to allow amendment by the pursuers, Mr Stephen Gray and Mr Stanley Gray, in an action of damages against the Braer Corporation and others.

Section 9 of the 1971 Act provides: "No action to enforce a claim in respect of a liability incurred under section 1 of this Act shall be entertained by any court ... unless the action is commenced not later than three years after the claim arose nor later than six years after the occurrence ... by reason of which the liability was incurred."

Mr Stuart Gale, QC and Mr Alan Mackenzie for the pursuers; Mr Malcolm Scott, QC and Mr Robert Howie for the defenders; Mr Colin Tyre, QC, for the minuters.

LORD GILL said that the case centred on the interpretation of section 9 of the 1971 Act, which counsel were agreed was a prescription rather than a limitation provision.

The pursuers sought to amend their pleadings to include reference to losses alleged to have been suffered by the partnership of which they had been partners. That claim was made by the minute of amendment which came more than three but less than six years after the discharge.

Counsel were agreed that if the triennial prescription referred to in section 9 applied, the claim of the partnership, if valid, prescribed before the minute of amendment had been lodged: if the claim was subject to a sexennial prescription, it had been timeously made.

The pursuers argued that the word "nor" in section 9 indicated that there were different categories of loss to which one or other of two prescriptive periods applied.

In the case of a loss incurred once and for all the triennial prescription applied. In a case of continuing losses, however, the only prescription that applied was a sexennial prescription.

It might be that certain losses would not be sustained until more than three years after the claim arose.

Future losses in a continuing loss case could be unpredictable and could not be assessed if a triennial prescription applied.

For the defenders and minuters it was argued that section 9 simply meant that all claims were subject to a triennial prescription running from the date when the claim emerged but that in any event no claim could be pursued more than six years after the occurrence resulting in the discharge of oil. It had been submitted that the ordinary rule that prescription commenced with the first concurrence of damnum and injuria, even though further losses were expected to occur.

His Lordship considered that the submission of the pursuers was not a natural reading of the section.

That section created one prescriptive period of three years applicable to all claims, with a long-stop provision that after the elapse of six years from the date of the relevant occurrence no action could be brought to enforce any claim whether for losses already sustained or for losses apprehended.

To be timeous any action had to be raised within three years from the date on which the claim arose and in any event it had to be raised within six years of the date of the relevant occurrence or the first of the relevant occurrences.

Law agents: Paull & Williamsons; Henderson Boyd Jackson, WS; Morton Fraser Partnership, WS.

Ferry economic loss too remote

P & O Scottish Ferries Ltd v The Braer Corporation

Before Lord Gill

[Judgment January 7]

Section 1 of the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution) Act 1971 was clear in its terms and did not require to be interpreted with the assistance of the underlying International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, signed in Brussels in 1969.

Its scope was such as to exclude claims for relational economic losses alleged by a ferry company serving the Shetland Islands at a time when those islands were subject to adverse publicity consequent on the Braer oil spill. Such losses as were claimed were not proximate to the casualty.

Lord Gill, sitting in the Outer House of the Court of Session, so held, dismissing an action of damages by P & O Scottish Ferries Ltd against the Braer Corporation and others.

Mr Stuart Gale, QC and Mr Alan Mackenzie for the pursuers; Mr Malcolm Scott, QC and Mr Robert Howie for the defenders; Mr Colin Campbell, QC and Mr Colin Tyre, QC for the minuters.

LORD GILL said that the pursuers operated a passenger and freight ferry service between Shetland and the mainland. They sought compensation under the 1971 Act for damage caused by oil contamination from the wreck of the Braer.

There were seven head of claim: loss of passenger revenue; loss of on-board sales; loss of commercial trailer traffic revenue; loss of land-based trailer traffic on Shetland; advertising costs; costs of loss assessors in preparing the claim; and increased agents' commission.

The defenders argued that the claims were based on purely relational economic loss and were, properly analysed, too remote. There were no circumstances creating special proximity to satisfy the principle in *Murphy v Brentwood DC* ([1991] 1 AC 398).

The pursuers sought to go beyond the arguments which had been unsuccessful in *Landcatch v The Braer Corporation* (*The Times* March 6, 1998).

By reference to the underlying Convention they sought to give section 1 of the 1972 Act its natural meaning unconstrained by the technical definitions of domestic legal concepts: see *Stag Line v Foscolo Mango and Co* ([1932] AC 328).

It had also been argued that in construing a statute by reference to a Convention, it was to be assumed that the legislation was in accordance with the Convention rather than otherwise: see *T Petitioner* (1997 SLT 724).

In any event, it had been argued, there was sufficient proximity by reason of the fact that the pursuers operated the only ferry service between Shetland and the mainland.

His Lordship considered that the authorities relied on in support of the construction argument were directed to the construction of legislation in which a Convention was enacted directly in its authentic English text.

That was not the case with the present Convention, which did not appear in the 1971 Act.

Instead the Act gave effect to it by enacting the substance in normal statutory language.

Section 1 was clear on its face and did not support the width of construction for which the pursuers contended.

Further, the proximity argument failed too. There was nothing to create the requisite proximity.

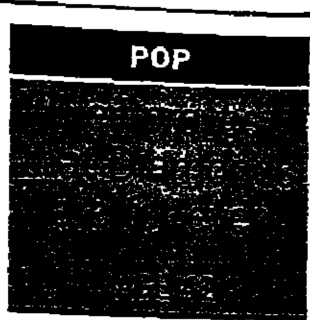
Essentially the claim was that parties who would otherwise have entered into contracts with them failed to do so and the operation of their business became less profitable than it otherwise would have been.

On the pursuers' own averments, those losses were not the direct consequence of the escape of oil. They were no more than an indirect consequence of adverse publicity affecting the image of Shetland.

Law agents: Paull & Williamsons; Henderson Boyd Jackson, WS; Morton Fraser, WS.



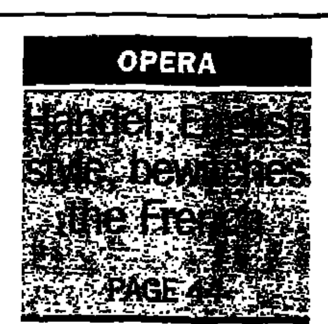
POP



THE TIMES

ARTS

OPERA





When the demons hit the canvas

For many people, Jackson Pollock's painting defines the avant-garde at its vilest. Richard Cork tells us why the Tate's show is required viewing



Number 23 (1948), done in enamel on gesso. The years from 1948 to 1950 were the greatest of Pollock's life, when a new maturity on canvas coincided with mass fame — or notoriety

Half a century has passed since Jackson Pollock became the most notorious painter to emerge in postwar America. But for many he remains the epitome of the modern artist's capacity to bewilder and alienate. Laying his colossal canvases on a paint-spattered floor, and then dancing round them in an ecstasy of dripping and pouring, Pollock may seem the cynical embodiment of everything suspicious about the avant-garde. Reviled as a charlatan, he is still an easy target for anyone seeking to mock the supposed madness of Modernism.

Pollock did indeed suffer from a turbulent psyche, and booze often transformed him into a violent, loud-mouthed boor. The truth, though, is that nobody could have been less bogus. He was painfully serious about the need to forge an heroic and audacious new art. From the outset of this enthralling Tate retrospective he appears embroiled in a life-or-death struggle to convey his urgent vision of the world.

> 'In his art he seems embroiled in a life or death struggle'

The surprisingly small self-portrait that kick-starts the exhibition discloses a gaunt and haunted young man. Barely visible in the encircling dark, he seems to gaze with alarm at the approach of unguessable danger. Pollock probably painted this disquieting image soon after moving from California to New York in 1930. Only 18, he strove throughout the decade ahead to find a coherent voice. But he succeeded only in succumbing to alcoholism and exposing the extent of his debt to mentors as diverse as the populist Thomas Hart Benton and the Mexican revolutionary David Alfaro Siqueiros.

Whatever their differences, both these painters reserved their greatest ambitions for mural projects. Pollock would himself arrive at his supreme achievements by tackling wall-size surfaces, but his 1930s paintings remained modest in size. In this sense they reflect the difficulties of the Depression years, even if a restlessness runs through them. At one point, a painting called *The Flame* fills the entire canvas with incendiary brush-marks that are strikingly prophetic. Its leaping, writhing forms approach abstraction, yet Pollock's hopes were centred on the human figure.

The aggression latent in most of his early work erupted at the end of the decade, when he painted a murderous image where naked bodies swarm viciously below a menacing knife. It looks, at first, like a mythological scene. Its savagery, though, was also a measure of Pollock's inner torment.

In an alarming canvas called *Birth* a face resembling a gruesomely distorted version of his early self-portrait snarls in a maelstrom of twisted limbs, yelling mouths and predatory teeth. It seems to dramatise Pollock's notion that self-discovery would be a hard-fought and desperate affair.

He was right. During the 1940s, when the New York avant-garde finally gained international ascendancy, Pollock waged an almost Oedipal war against the inhibiting influence of Miró and Picasso. In 1943 he overcame their example by adopting a technique of pouring with oil and enamel. It released a new vitality, with accident playing a crucial role, even if most of Pollock's paintings were still dominated by a search for expressive figuration.

Both these urges contribute to his first outright masterpiece, the so-called *Mural* commissioned by Peggy Guggenheim for the entrance hall of her Manhattan house. Pollock ended up painting it on a 20ft canvas, by far the largest surface he had ever tackled. He even had to tear down a wall in his own apartment to accommodate it, and after a long delay completed the painting in a burst of hectic activity.

The adrenalin surge he must have experienced can still be felt in front of this ferocious tour de force. At first sight abstract, the frieze-like image relies for its muscular impact on the elongated black forms striding across the canvas with whiplash zeal. Pollock allows them to be invaded by more ragged elements, as if the forms were being forced to march through a jungle of burgeoning vegetation.

But their identity as human bodies becomes clear. The entire painting mounts an assault on the retina, envenomed by swipes and spurts of the brush and a particularly bilious use of yellow.

No wonder that Peggy Guggenheim eventually gave *Mural* away. It is an uningratiating triumph, asserting the qualities that Pollock pinpointed when he explained in 1944 that "living is keener, more demanding, more intense and expansive in New York than in the West". Before he was able to develop the discoveries initiated in *Mural*, however, Pollock realised that he had to leave the city. Its dynamism was too overwhelming for his unstable disposition: several works are in danger of choking on their appetite for excess. The blizzards of paint Pollock hurled at his canvases could end up looking congested rather than liberating.

Only after Pollock and his wife Lee Krasner moved to a farmhouse on Long Island did he arrive at a formidable maturity. The drinking ceased, for a while, while the proximity to countryside and Accabonac Creek must have encouraged him to admit more elemental references to his work. Titles as evocative as *Sea Change* and *Enchanted Forest* accentuate the new mood.

But the real breakthrough came in 1948. Pollock realised that, however much he flicked, dribbled, splashed and trailed his paint over the surface, his agitated mark-making need not obscure the underlying presence of a plain canvas ground. As a result, *Number 1A, 1948* is able to breathe with a marvellous sense of airiness.

Even more refreshing is *Summertime*, where Pollock defines a frenzied sequence of simplified, ecstatic forms. The joyfulness of *Summertime* made an exuberant backdrop when Pollock posed before it for a 1949 feature in *Life*. "Is he the greatest living painter in the United States?" asked the headline. It was a prescient question. For the next year Pollock produced the paintings that turned *Life*'s headline into an unassailable truth. Three great canvases — *Lavender Mist*, *One: Number 31*, and *Number 32* — are gathered together at the Tate to demonstrate his mastery.

Although they are the product of the same galvanic working method, flinging and splashing on to floor-based canvases in his barn-like East Hampton studio, the three paintings differ radically from each other. *Lavender Mist* is a vaporous work, where oil, enamel and aluminium paint are applied so densely that our eyes cannot penetrate their blurred, layered complexity.

Number 32 goes to the other extreme, relying solely on skeins of black enamel to assert their demonic, lunging vivacity on a pale ground. But the crowning achievement is *One: Number 31*, where all Pollock's finest impulses meet in a unique synthesis. At once sublime and menacing, all-encompassing and unfathomable, it must surely be counted among the supreme pinnacles of Western art. Its assurance seems absolute, yet Pollock's exploration of surging, limitless renewal is also charged with fear and vulnerability.

His ability to confront this vision of proliferating immensity may well have contributed to his own destruction. Did the vastness conjured in *One: Number 31* undermine his fragile stability? It is impossible to tell, but the downward spiral of his subsequent life and art is undeniable. He never regained the miraculous poise of 1950, and the depressive blackness in his return to figurative imagery discloses the extent of his torment.

In one final summoning of energy, he managed to complete the magisterial *Blue Poles* in 1952. Hanging on the end wall of the Tate survey, it has an incandescent impact. But the poles flung with such brio on to its deliriously scrambled surface also resemble tree-trunks stripped and scorched by the advent of some terminal conflagration. The enchanted forest of 1947 now seemed to him irretrievably despoiled, and Pollock's short life ended in a drunken car-smash only four years after *Blue Poles* heralded its maker's own catastrophe.

● *Tate Gallery (0171-887 8000) from tomorrow until June 6*

John Russell Taylor on a Scottish master of pastel now rediscovered

Educating us about Archie

Almost everyone will have seen one image by or after Archibald Skirving, but very few would be able to put a name to its author. Skirving, ironically, holds his (minimal) place in the public imagination with one of his slightest and most informal works, his portrait head in red chalk of Robert Burns. From the beginning it was endlessly reproduced in editions of Burns, and thence became the image of choice for any artist contemplating a fancy picture of the poet being struck by inspiration, spending a social evening with the lads, or looking back at Highland Mary.

So who was Skirving, and what else did he do? The first question is partially answered by the title of the big new show at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, *Raeburn's Rival*. After recent shows devoted to the other two important Scottish portraitists of the 18th century, Ramsay and Raeburn, it was only logical to fill us in on the third figure in the triumvirate. But then, any triumvirate is liable to have its Lepidus as well as its Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, and possibly Skirving is deservedly that forgotten third. It must be significant that he needs identifying in the context of his two near-contemporaries.

Well, it is and it isn't. It seems likely that Skirving is not a name to conjure with in the same way as Ramsay and Raeburn for one simple reason: they painted mainly in oils, and he excelled primarily in pastel. Sir Walter Scott described him as "an unrivalled artist as a painter in crayons",



Archibald Skirving's *Robert Dundas of Arniston*

which sounds to our ears patronising if not dismissive. It was certainly not intended so: in Scott's day pastel was just as esteemed a medium as oils. A generation later, Carlyle simply remarked on Skirving's "consummate skill in portraiture", but after that he seems to fade from critical view, even among Scots.

The Edinburgh show demonstrates clearly how undeserved this was. Skirving (1749-1819) began as a miniaturist in Edinburgh, went on to work in London, and then in 1786 settled in Rome for eight years. The Rome interlude was the foundation of his fortune: there he both learnt all there was to know about pastel, and made contact with many British partakers of the Grand Tour. When he returned to Britain he based himself in Edinburgh, with occasional visits to London to carry out portrait-drawing commissions.

Curiously, the famous drawing of Burns was not at all characteristic of his work. By his own admission he never met Burns, and the drawing is a somewhat idealised posthumous image based on a portrait from the life by Burns's friend Alexander Nasmyth (also in the show).

Skirving's own original art is characterised more by what looks like a rigorous refusal to idealise. He is particularly good where Lawrence, say, was weakest: at portraying without sentimentality young women probably considered in their day attractive. He absolutely imposes belief in his own veracity with such portraits of the 1790s as *Mrs Johnston of Hutton Hall* and *Margaret Sym, Mrs John Wilson*, as well as with his pictures of children, such as the eccentric image of the three or four-year-old Robert Dundas of Arniston embracing what appears to be a pet owl.

Skirving's men are equally convincing, not least the self-portrait in a black beaver hat, executed in Rome. Seemingly he garnered a reputation for personal eccentricity in his later years, and perhaps not all his sitters cared to be shown warts and all.

But neither of these, let alone his preference for pastel, of which he emerges as one of the great 18th-century masters, justifies the neglect into which he has fallen. Not for the first time, the National Galleries of Scotland are putting right a major wrong.

● *Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1 Queen Street, Edinburgh (0131-332 2266) Mon-Sat 10am-5 pm, Sun 2-5pm, until April 5*

PAINTING, apparently, is back, led by a revival of interest in New York. The Entwhistle Gallery gathers together a discordant gang in **Painting Lab**. Ten London-based painters attempt to update an outmoded artform by relating it to the mass-produced imagery of a modern age. Jason Brooks beautifully transliterates a photograph of a funeral wreath on to a monumental canvas. Nicky Hoberman finds inspiration in Polaroids. Her airbrushed Lolitas deride the naivety of the childhood snapshot.

Other artists play around with abstract patterns and graphic motifs. They use computers to remap forms or collage digital images into painterly pieces. But the brushstroke seems pretty much banished. And though colour — inspired by this season's fashion designs — may make a striking return in a Graham Little piece, I'm not sure that this work amounts to anything much more meaningful than a rather delicious-looking cross between a Dulux colour chart and a liquorice allsort.
6 Cork St, W1 (0171-734 6440) until March 27

AROUND THE GALLERIES

☐ THE traffic underpass has acquired a sombre aura since the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. At the Tate Gallery **Thomas Demand** follows in the footsteps of a number of recent film directors in playing on this ominous atmosphere. *Tunnel* is not for nervous drivers. To a muffled soundtrack of thundering wheels, the camera swings down into the pillared gloom of an empty underpass. Then blackness. The same loop plays again and again until the viewer is mesmerised, vertiginous. Does the car swerve at one point? It's hard to be sure. Demand plays tricks with imprinted memories of our urban environment.
Millbank, SW1 (0171-887 8000) until April 25

☐ AFTER the Britpack fetched such fantastic prices at auction, the **Helly Nahmad Gallery** is putting its own collection up for sale. Here are Hirst's spots, Quinn's heads and Hume's hospital doors. The luxurious space is the perfect setting, so why don't they seem so exciting any more?
2 Cork St, London W1 (0171-494 3200) until April 30

☐ AT A time when digital technology plays tricks on the photograph, a group of six artists at Purdy Hicks defend their skill. As the viewer focuses and stares, he is drawn into an almost metaphysical world. Fifteen years have passed since **Floris Neussüs** crept out into his garden on a thundery night and put photographic paper into a shrubbery. The flashes of lightening created phototraces. Spidery silhouettes are etched with light, petals collect still pools of darkness, stamens pencil fragile forms. **Paul Kenny** works the same alchemy with rock and water, with beaded bubbles and patterns of spume against the gleaming blackness of stone.
65 Hopton St, London SE1 (0171-401 9595) until April 10

RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON

■ **CONCERTS**
Goethe celebrated

ARTS

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Songs from the master

GOETHE CONCERTS
Allen/Kringelborn
Queen Elizabeth Hall

The strange and picaresque novel *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, a sort of *Tristram Shandy* without the jokes and punctuated by poems, is hardly the easiest way into the works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. So it was brave of Roger Vignoles to focus on these songs — and the script — in the programme he devised as part of the South Bank's weekend celebrating the 250th anniversary of the German poet's birth.

Nothing, after all, reveals Goethe himself more tellingly than the figure of Wilhelm Meister: his obsession with the theatre: his acute observation of humanity's outcasts: his deep longing for Italy.

Yet it is the songs which Goethe writes for the spooky figures of the old blind harper and the child-waif Mignon which, in their musical settings, have lived on quite independently of their often alienating and impenetrable prose context. Vignoles's notion of linking a selection of the *Wilhelm Meister* songs of Schubert, Schumann and Wolf with readings from the novel turned out to be more seductive in the idea than in its realisation.

This was partly because of the insufferably mumbled and gabbled narration of Samuel West: and partly because the performances of the songs themselves really did tell us all we needed to know. The Norwegian soprano Solveig Kringelborn sang out the unquiet heart of young Mignon. She recreated in glowing voice Hugo Wolf's wonderfully impassioned fleshing-out of the anguished questions of *Kennst du das Land?*. And, with the silver side of her soprano, she caught quite unselfconsciously the poignancy of Mignon's angel-song, *So lasst mich scheinen*.

Thomas Allen, for his part, gave voice to the shadowy figure of the blind harper, stealing from door to door in Schubert's eloquently simple settings. Vignoles, whose pianistic stage-management of the songs was as illuminating as his selection, also accompanied Schubert's rarely heard duet version of *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*.

In the first half of the evening, Goethe and his composers were free to speak for themselves. And there was plenty to say. There was the surprise of Carl Loewe's chilling setting of *Erlkönig*, generally monopolised in recital by Schubert, and his *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, both revealed as real performance art by Allen and Vignoles. And, within this somewhat overcrowded evening, Beethoven and Liszt illuminated Goethe's innermost soul anew in deeply perceptive performances of songs such as *Mailied* and *Über allen Gipfeln*.

HILARY FINCH

Style and substance

OAE/Elder
Festival Hall

One of the problems the period-instrument movement regularly has to face is that a modern concert may well span several decades of composition. Which instruments, then, are to be used? Compromises are inevitable, as exemplified by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's Sunday evening concert that brought the Goethe weekend to a triumphant close.

Since the works included were Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture, Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody* and Liszt's *Faust Symphony*, dating from 1810, 1869 and 1857 respectively, the issues are complex, for instruments and performance practice varied widely from city to city and decade to decade. Furthermore, the OAE originally specialised in earlier music anyway: Brahms and Liszt are new territory for them.

As a result, a compromise pitch just below modern concert pitch was adopted (fair enough), while some violins had chin-rests, some not, some cellos had spikes, some not, and the policy on matters such as vibrato seemed equally inconsistent.

The hollow sound of natural horns was aptly chilling in the introduction to the *Alto Rhapsody*, depicting the symbolically bleak landscape of Goethe's winter journey. The mezzo soprano Jane Irwin also conveyed that desolation, as well as the consolation of the final stanza, where she was joined by the well-drilled men of the Philharmonia Chorus. The conducting of Mark Elder ensured an empathetic response to the text, and a suitably dramatic reflection of heroic ideals in the *Egmont* Overture.

But it was his masterly control in the *Faust Symphony* that delivered a convincing account in spite of a problematic score and compromised circumstances. Given Elder's operatic credentials, it should be no surprise that he was able to bring this drama of the imagination to vibrant life. But what also impressed was his handling of the first movement's symphonic structure, often criticised as sprawling, certainly idiosyncratic. The fanfare passages marked "grandioso" were jubilant, never vulgar, while the movement as a whole (depicting Faust himself) had the requisite restless surge and an irresistible sweep.

In the slow "Gretchen" movement the timbre of a trio of wooden flutes had a truly celestial quality, while the parodic, demonic element of the final "Mephistopheles" movement was brilliantly realised. If the grandeur of the main organ was sacrificed for considerations of pitch, the heroic endeavours of tenor soloist Justin Lavender and the Philharmonia men were enough to ensure a stirring conclusion to an enterprising concert — and indeed weekend.

BARRY MILLINGTON



"We are here to break down barriers," Neil Diamond told his Wembley audience, adding a reference to the current trade war: "Who cares about bananas?"

A moveable feast

POP
Neil Diamond
Wembley Arena

The first of Neil Diamond's five sold-out shows at Wembley Arena generated such excitement that most of the crowd had settled into their seats long before their hero appeared. To pass the time, they reacted with increasing enthusiasm to the pre-show announcements. You can understand why they might get worked up by the words "Neil Diamond will be onstage in a few moments", but the cheers that met the command "No smoking in the auditorium" sounded rather bizarre at a rock concert.

The show is billed as "Neil Diamond in the Round", and the main feature of this 30-date European tour is a revolving stage built in the middle of each arena. The set-up lent the show an intimacy that you don't normally associate with Wembley and seemed to fuel the crowd's fervour to such a pitch that, by the time Diamond took the stage, the entire auditorium was standing up, ready to clap along to the triumphant *Beautiful Noise*.

Dressed in black, Diamond was backed by a nine-piece band comprising two guitarists, three drummers, two keyboard players, a bassist and a female backing singer, all strategically placed around the revolving stage. "Can anybody hear me?" he yelled after *Beautiful Noise*, inciting an even louder one, then he urged everyone to turn to the person on their right and give them a great big kiss. "We are here to break down barriers," he said, adding a quick reference to the British-American trade war. "Who cares about bananas?"

The two-and-a-half hour set that ensued relied on Diamond classics — *Forever in Blue Jeans, I'm a Believer, Song Sung Blue, Cracklin' Rosie, Sweet Caroline* and *You Don't Bring Me Flowers* — rather than anything new and, throughout them all, the singer had the crowd entranced, responding to one woman's call with: "Darlin', I love you, too."

Musically, the highlight came after just four songs when the lights went low and Diamond strapped on a black Gibson guitar. "I once dreamt of owning an Everly Brothers guitar, a Gibson," he said. "And now the Gibson company have come out with a Neil Diamond guitar. But let's see if it works before I go round bragging about it." He then strummed the first chord of his early hit *Cherry Cherry*, dramatically announced: "It works!", and continued through the dark moods of *Girl, You'll Be a Woman Soon* and *Solitary Man*.

Later, Diamond performed songs from his latest record *The Movie Album — As Time Goes By*, his version of *Can't Help Falling In Love* given added resonance by the fact that drummer Ronnie Tutt had also played with Elvis Presley during his Las Vegas period. The show ended with *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother*, the song made famous by the Hollies, with Diamond, circling the stage to wave in every direction, before parting with a phrase that you might have expected: "Thank you, London, we love you."

ANN SCANLON

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Bass and baritone to the fore; Iceland's oral culture

OPERA

■ **NO TENORS ALLOWED**
Hampson/Ramey/Munich Radio Orch/Gomez-Martinez
Teldec 0630 13149-2 ★★★
£15.99

THE disc could also have been called *Sam and Tom*, had that not brought echoes of the conspirators in Verdi's *Ballo in maschera*. Samuel Ramey and Thomas Hampson come together for the first time in a recital devoted to duets for bass and baritone. And a very lively affair it is.

All items come from Italian opera, although the confrontation between Posa and King Philip in Verdi's *Don Carlos* is correctly sung in French. The two Americans are unequalled in their respective roles and the result is as impressive as might be expected. Here the voices take on very different colourings, elsewhere the timbres become quite similar.

Take the patter duet in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, very jauntily accompanied by Miguel Gomez-Martinez and his Munich orchestra, in which Pasquale and Malatesta set off to see what is happening in the back garden. The parts could easily have been reversed, right down to the cackles of glee at the end. A real show-stopper, as is the "Loyalty Duet" from Bellini's *I Puritani*, where both men thunder away on behalf of their country and one another.

There are curiosities, including a twosome from Verdi's early comedy *Un giorno di regno*, much influenced by Donizetti. All in all a combination to raise the operatic spirits.

JOHN HIGGINS

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498



Constant Lambert: a new CD pays tribute to this "bright light of British music snuffed out prematurely in 1951"

ORCHESTRAL

■ **LAMBERT**
Tiresias; Pomona
English Northern Philharmonia/Lloyd-Jones
Hyperion CDA 67049 ★★★
£14.99

ONE of the brightest lights in British music was snuffed out prematurely in August 1951. Constant Lambert's death is unlikely to have been caused, as some said, by heartbreak at the poor critical reception given his last ballet, *Tiresias* (diabetes and alcohol also played their part) but, after enjoying five seasons at Covent Garden, the work disappeared from view and was not heard again until a BBC revival in 1995. This excellent premiere recording from Hyperion may well restore a major score to the repertory, even perhaps to the stage.

By 1951 Lambert had moved on beyond the irreverent French-inspired Neo-Classicism of his early manhood (exemplified in the one-act ballet score *Pomona*, given here as the coupling) and adopted a starker, often darker idiom. There is much to enjoy, as well as admire, however, in this individual treatment of the classical story.

The English Northern Philharmonia under David Lloyd-Jones, alert to both its hard-edged Mediterranean brilliance and its sombre shadow side, make a very strong case indeed for its rehabilitation.

BARRY MILLINGTON

VOCAL

■ **EDDA**
Myths from Medieval Iceland
Sequentia
DHM/BMG 05472 77381 2
★★★ *£14.99*

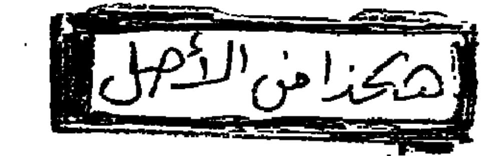
THE sybil prophesied the end of all things; Odin rode to the realm of the dead; Thor made his transvestite journey to the land of the giants. But their lips were sealed, their deeds dumb on the page until Benjamin Bagby and his Cologne-based early music ensemble Sequentia stumbled across a little-known treasure trove of medieval sung poetry in the University of Reykjavik, and applied their findings to the reconstruction and revocalisation of the great stories from the *Poetic Edda*.

This enthralling disc is their only document. Bagby and his colleagues have shaped their singing and playing from folklorists' tapes, and from elements of still live oral cultures, and their own performances are memorised, never notated. True to the tradition of the professional minstrels who travelled from farm to farm, they recreate and pass on this repertoire, meticulously researching its unique modal language within the context of their own experience of other medieval traditions, such as that of Hildegard of Bingen.

The result is an ongoing Nordic project of which this disc gives an irresistible first taste. Bagby himself gives a compelling performance of *The Tale of Thrym*; Elizabeth Gaver's fiddle commemorates *Baldur the Beautiful*; and the ensemble combine in extracts of spine-chilling beauty from *The Prophecy of the Sybil*.

HILARY FINCH

★ *Worth hearing*
★★ *Worth considering*
★★★ *Worth buying*



■ THEATRE
Soliloquies for starters

ARTS

■ FUNDING
New source of arts money?

Slings, arrows and Versace

THEATRE: Heather Neill finds out why 19 amateur groups are busy putting their own spin on *Hamlet*



ALAN WELLER

Doing battle with the Bard: Rupert Wickham and GCSE students Arti Patel, Rupa Patel and Bhavik Patel from the Swaminarayan Temple School act out a theme of trench warfare

Monday morning at a girls' school in South London, and Hamlet is busy chopping his play up into manageable chunks and encouraging improvisation suggested by the story. Rupert Wickham hasn't even started thinking about how to interpret the title character; for now his purpose at Plumstead Manor School is to lead a workshop, the first in a venture known as Theatre Unlimited's Hamlet Project.

Theatre Unlimited is a company determined to live up to its name. Its two artistic directors, Wickham and Christopher Geelan, are intent upon attracting a new audience into the theatre and giving them "an experience which places theatre at the centre of their lives".

The result is an ambitious community scheme which for three weeks this month will bring 19 amateur groups to perform on the stage of the Greenwich Theatre. Each group has been allocated half an hour to present a play, based on themes in *Hamlet*, as a curtain-raiser to Geelan's professional production with Wickham as the Prince of Denmark.

This idealistic plan has a practical financial underpinning. Each group is asked to contribute £1,500 in return for two months of weekly workshops led by one of two directors with educational experience, as well as advice from an actor and the production's designer and stage manager.

Poorer groups are being supported by a galaxy of starry patrons, from Alan Ayckbourn to Zoë Ball, although most will raise the money by selling their allocation of 100 tickets. The result is almost £30,000 guaranteed in advance — as well as 100 people in the audience at each performance who might not be there otherwise.

As education director of the English Shakespeare Company, Geelan has a respected reputation for bringing exciting Shakespeare to more than 100,000 young people, including primary schoolchildren, each year. Finding groups willing to commit to the project nevertheless took time — sometimes, he says, Theatre Unlimited resorted to "the bombardment principle". Adults were the most elusive — the directors had hoped to interest groups of psychiatrists and lawyers, but in the end settled mainly for schools, with one group of adults, all Asian, preparing their contribution on Sundays.

> 'One group used an American gangster style'

The 400-seat Greenwich Theatre, closed since its London Arts Board funding lapsed last year, is an ideal venue, says Geelan, who is confident that groups of pupils who are studying the text will fill the remaining seats. He is planning to give an occasional pre-show talk, but the evening will begin usually at 6.30pm with one of the devised pieces, followed by a break and then *Hamlet* at 7.30pm. This will be a three-hour version, straightforward but not "dumbed down", the cuts arrived at by "trimming" speeches rather than cutting characters. Fortinbras, for instance, dispensed with in some productions, is preserved.

At Plumstead Manor School on that first Monday, Shirley Sewell's GCSE drama group were enjoying interpreting episodes of the script in different styles, from American gangster to *EastEnders*. The ruling family came to grief beside a Hollywood swimming pool talking of Versace, but however far the students roamed from the original, Wickham always encouraged them to interweave Shakespeare's lines with their own.

He was also present in the early stages of preparation at the Swaminarayan Temple School in Harlesden, North London, where a group of seven Hindu GCSE students were improvising with a will.

Three, re-enacting a trench warfare scene, pressed chairs into service as a dugout while the others imagined being visited by an inexplicable, frightening force in the jungle, for which the school's potted plants provided makeshift vegetation. Between workshops, rehearsals and experiments continued with their teacher, Selina Moses. When I visited the Swaminarayan Temple School a fortnight later, with six weeks still to go, the students had decided that they were going to investigate the fragmentation of personality under stress, as suggested by Hamlet's predicament, and had allocated themselves aspects of character in a futuristic setting. Somehow "To be or not to be" was going to be integrated into the final version.

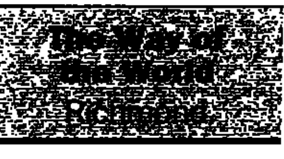
What about Wickham's own preparation? He admits to having had less musing time than he would like — the consequence of administrative duties — but says he cannot think of anything he would rather be doing. He has decided that two scenes in particular, the Nunnery and Closet scenes, are "the most profound and the most interesting psychologically", that Hamlet's relationship with Ophelia is coloured by his relationship with Gertrude. He has come to the conclusion that Hamlet is a thinker by nature, but that suffering from melancholy is not his usual state, although his mental balance is certainly disturbed at the beginning of the play.

"If you honestly and profoundly explore the character, that's when it's cathartic for the audience; if you shy away from that, it becomes self-indulgent. John Gielgud said that more than any other character, you have to find it in yourself and because of that every Hamlet is unique."

Will he watch the curtain-raisers? "As many as possible, yes. It's nice to have something different to take into the performance with you each evening. But the bottom line is to tell the story well."

● Hamlet *is at the Greenwich Theatre (0870-840 1111) from Saturday for three weeks*

Congreve's curiously short-witted comedy



Peering at her cracked complexion in a glass the widowed Lady Wishfort describes her face as "an old peeled wall", a famously bizarre simile that puts the audience on her side, no matter that she is a stubborn old bird who won't let her niece marry the man she fancies. In Sam Walters's current production Auriol Smith's flirtatious dither gives the line its due: we are duly delighted by her, and we laugh.

But while it is not the only amusing line in Congreve's comedy, on the Orange Tree's boxing-ring stage its fellows take a long time to arrive. Not until the final scene, when all the bewildering subplots are disentangled, does a comic spirit truly take wing, and this is chiefly because the play's villain is being hoist on his own petard, always good for a satisfied laugh.

Wit, the enjoyable play of words and the expression of unexpected feelings, is surprisingly thin on the ground. This is even the case in the celebrated scene where Millament and Mirabell tease each other into marriage. Amanda Royle and Jeremy Crutchley say the lines; experienced actors, they look at each other and listen to each other, altering facial expression or remaining coolly impassive as they deem appropriate. Yet the scene raises barely a smile.



Jeremy Crutchley and Lucy Tregear at the Orange Tree

It is true that the plot of this play is not only difficult to summarise but defies understanding even while it unfolds in front of us. Two of the women are wealthy, and schemes to obtain their fortunes or prevent others obtaining them are proposed, revised, abandoned and replaced. One or two characters appear to have some hold over one or two others but it is easy to miss what this is, leaving yawning gaps in our understanding of what drives them.

Looking to the production to help us to sort out these matters, we are not encouraged by a setting that is bare except for some chairs that are occasionally on view, nor by costumes that dress the entire cast — whether baronet, fop or lady's maid — in identical dagged jerkins worn over white jeans or skirts.

Certainly this turns our attention mostly to the faces, and thence to the words, yet there is so much posing and posturing to their movements, such feigning and feinting in the exchanges, that the characters soon forfeit our concern and seldom fully regain it.

There may be a case for keeping fans, card tables and candle sconces out of Restoration revivals, trusting the words to carry the day. But this production does not prove it.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Care for the arts? Then share with them

If subsidy, sponsorship and audiences can't fund the arts, who can?
Simon Tait meets a businessman who thinks he has the answer

The man who bought Nigel Kennedy his Stradivarius has come up with a scheme which he thinks will "change the face of arts funding in the UK". Nigel Brown, a successful Cambridge businessman and arts lover, has launched ArtShare, a scheme which, he believes, provides a "fourth way" beyond subsidy, sponsorship and the box office.

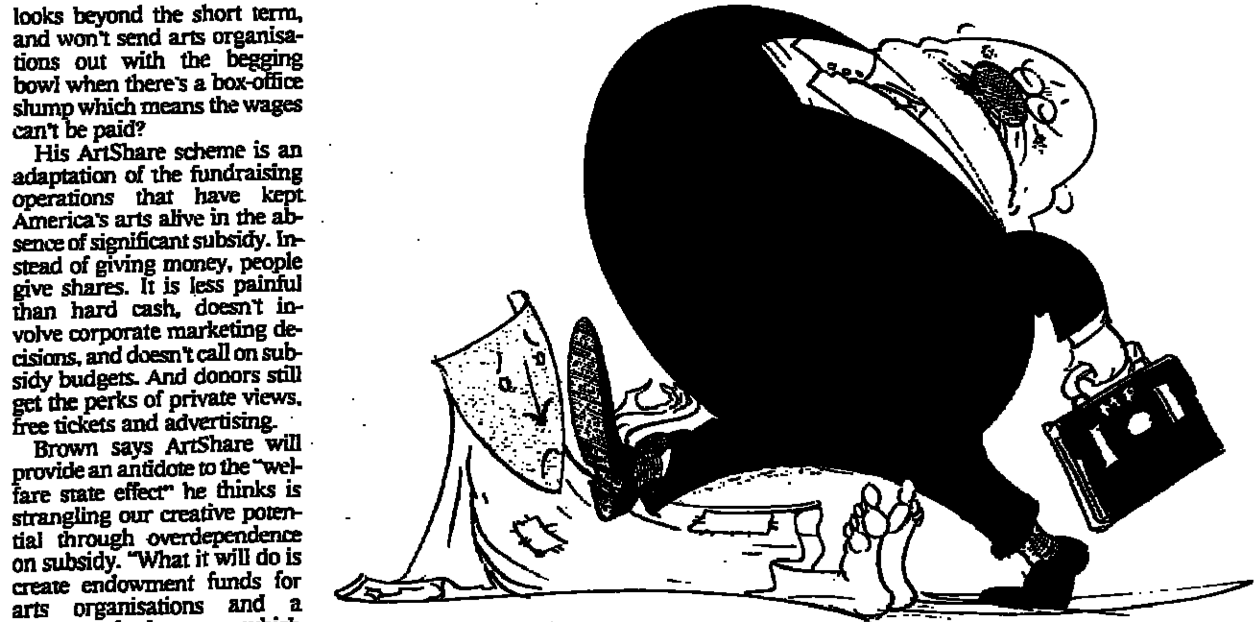
We have had them before, of course: stabilisation, subscription ticketing, endowment funds, the lottery — and their benefits have been submerged in operating flaws and wildly unrealistic forecasts. And, in the wake of another Budget, the debate about arts funding loses no heat, with all three traditional sources under strain. The Culture Secretary Chris Smith got praise last year for prising an extra £290 million out of the Treasury, but this barely brought government subsidy back to the level of five years ago, and the National Lottery flow has all but dried up. Arts practitioners flatly disbelieve claims of increased sponsorship, and the burden of support falls once more on the poor audience.

So has Brown found a way of funding the arts which looks beyond the short term, and won't send arts organisations out with the begging bowl when there's a box-office slump which means the wages can't be paid?

His ArtShare scheme is an adaptation of the fundraising operations that have kept America's arts alive in the absence of significant subsidy. Instead of giving money, people give shares. It is less painful than hard cash, doesn't involve corporate marketing decisions, and doesn't call on subsidy budgets. And donors still get the perks of private views, free tickets and advertising.

Brown says ArtShare will provide an antidote to the "welfare state effect" he thinks is strangling our creative potential through overdependence on subsidy. "What it will do is create endowment funds for arts organisations and a source of income which doesn't rely on subsidy," says Brown. "The fact is that industrialists have lost their role in this, and it needs to be rediscovered."

He describes the scheme as "a matrix, a flexible, do-it-yourself kit which guarantees that whatever you give isn't going to be frittered on some loss-making brainwave. It goes into an endowment fund for revenue funding which has a limited annual drawdown of 5 per cent. Simple as that."



Down with central Government: Gerald Scarfe cartoons help to create ArtShare's identity

This is individual giving in which a number of shares can be donated from a portfolio, or a piece of a brand new company can be donated. The arts organisation then builds up a portfolio of its own to create an income stream — a £2 million fund should yield around £150,000 a year.

When Brown looked at the facts, at first he wasn't sure himself that it could be that simple. "The figures are extraordinary," Brown says. "The Stock Exchange is capitalised at about £1.4 trillion, and about 15 or 16 per cent of that is controlled by individuals which means about £224 billion. That's a fantastic potential resource."

He went to accountant friends at Deloitte & Touche and Arthur Andersen, who gave him the thumbs-up. "The reason something like this hasn't happened before," says David Oliver of Arthur Andersen, "is that arts organisations were so strapped that they were looking for cash to solve the immediate problems; they weren't really looking for schemes which would improve discipline in financial management.

"The other reason is that there is no Gift Aid tax break for this as there would be for a personal cash donation, and a small adjustment by the Chancellor which would make no significant difference to Treasury income could ensure that ArtShare changes financial security for the arts."

Brown, a keen amateur violinist, started his financial services company 25 years ago. As his success grew he became particularly keen to help top musicians to get decent instruments, and has so far spent about £4 million on that. Since then he has gone into management and in 1990 founded the agency Hazard Chase — a phrase from another enthusiasm, real tennis. That looks after the careers of Julian Bream, the Tallis Scholars and the Endellion Quartet among others. He is also on the board of English Touring Opera.

The guinea-pig for the scheme is the Cambridge Arts Theatre, of which Brown has recently become chairman. It has had a troubled financial history, says Brown, "constantly scrabbling round to fill the annual funding gap of £150,000 to £200,000". It was the first to get an arts lottery award, £7.5 million, which turned into a nightmare of learning project management on the job, delays in reopening, winning reluctant audiences back, and an inevitable deficit.

Cambridge Arts is now, two years after reopening, turning the corner and should break even this year. Its ArtShare programme, launched on March 1, has already persuaded two donors to give shares, one donation worth £5,000. Oliver has become a patron of the scheme, as have Sir Geoffrey Cass, the chairman of the RSC, the Liberal Democrat MP Robert Maclennan and Tim Melville-Ross, Director-General of the Institute of Directors. Gerald Scarfe has designed the promotional package for nothing.

"This is not a quick fix, that's the last thing the arts want at the moment," says Brown. "It's going to take some time, but not enough thinking about the medium and long term has been done. This will give a basis to build future security on."

● *For information on ArtShare phone 01223 357131, or email nigel.brown@nwbrown.co.uk*

■ **LISTINGS**
Ayckbourn in Leeds

ARTS

■ **OPERA**
Mishap for 'golden couple'

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargie

LONDON

ANDRE PREVIN: The concert series celebrating the 70th birthday of the dynamic showbiz and classical music personality finally gets off the ground after last Sunday's curtainraiser with Kiri Te Kanawa was cancelled. Here Previn conducts the London Symphony Orchestra in two 20th-century British works: Vaughan Williams's Fifth Symphony and Britten's evocative Spring Symphony. For the latter the LSO is joined by its chorus, with soloists Dame Felicity Lott, Roberta Alexander and John Mark Ainsley.
Barbican (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.30pm. ◩

TAKE THE FIRE: Four monologues for women (gambler, maid, prostitute, desperate lover) by Jean Cocteau, performed by Amanda Harris. Paul Carrington's direction weaves them together.
Lyric Studio, W6 (0181-741 8701). Opens tonight, 8pm. ◩

BACK2BACK: A musical double bill: Sharon D. Clarke stars in Lost and Found with music by Porter, Ellington, Warren Wills; while Peter Straker takes over in Amsterdam, based on songs by Jacques Brel.
Bridewell (0171-936 3456). Opens tonight, 7pm.

ELSEWHERE

LEEDS: Alan Ayckbourn's triptych of plays **Intimate Exchanges** hinges on whether Celia Teasdale smokes a cigarette or not. In the first one, *Affairs in a Tent*, she smokes it and starts a whirlwind romance.
Courtyard (0113-213 7700). Opens tonight, 7.45pm. ◩



Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducts in Manchester

MANCHESTER: Biyi Bandele's adaptation of Chinua Achebe's famous novel Things Fall Apart traces the mutual misunderstandings between white Christian colonialists and Nigerian tradition. National tour starts here.
Library Theatre (0161-236 7110). Opens tonight, 7.30pm. ◩

Also in **Manchester:** Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, former principal conductor of the Hallé, returns to lead his old orchestra in an evening of Mozart and Prokofiev. The acclaimed pianist Boris Berezovsky joins as soloist in Shostakovich's First Piano Concerto.
Bridgewater Hall (0161-907 9000). ◩

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only ◩ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

□ **SPEER:** Klaus Maria Brandauer *directs and plays the title role of* Hitler's master architect in Esther Vilar's drama. With Sven Eric Bechtolf.
Almeida (0171-359 4404).

□ **SLAVA'S SNOWSHOW:** The excellent Russian clown and mime artist Slava Polunin returns, with new material, new clowns as well as his unforgettable finale.
Piccadilly Theatre (0171-369 1734).

□ **BLUE HEART:** Caryl Churchill's pair of plays (*Heart's Desire* and *Blue Kettle*) express family disruption through tricks with words. Max Stafford-Clark directs for Out Of Joint.
Pleasance Theatre (0171-609 1800).

◩ **MACBETH:** Rufus Sewell and Sally Dexter play the superstitious thane and his missis in John Crowley's neo-brutalist production.
Queens, W1 (0171-494 5041).

□ **SHOCKHEADED PETER:** The Scissorman is back: wonderfully sinister show by the Cultural Industry *team with the Tiger Lillies and Martyn* Jacques's falsetto screech.
Lyric (0181-741 8701). ◩

□ **DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN:** Mark Little makes his West End debut in Rob Becker's new comedy, tracing the origins of the man/woman difference back to the caves.
Apollo (0171-494 5070).

■ **COPENHAGEN:** Heisenberg calls on Niels Bohr in wartime Denmark in Michael Frayn's intelligent play. Michael Blakemore directs.
Duchess (0171-494 5075).

□ **OKLAHOMA!:** National Theatre cast includes Maureen Lipman in transfer of Trevor Nunn's Rodgers and Hammerstein.
Lyceum (0171-416 6099).

◩ **RICHARD III:** Robert Lindsay puts on the hump for Elijah Moshinsky's RSC transfer from Stratford.
Savoy (0171-836 8888). ◩

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

BELOVED (15): Oprah Winfrey is surprisingly powerful as a runaway slave haunted by poltergeists, lynch mobs, and a dead daughter. Jonathan Demme fails, however, to get inside the festering heart of Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize winner.

FESTEN (15): Thomas Vinterberg's biting black, Danish farce features a disastrous family reunion. Shot with hand-held cameras, it manages to look spontaneous, ghastly, and deliciously voyeuristic.

KINI & ADAMS (NFT): Idrissa Ouédraogo's African buddy movie is a mostly enchanting parable about two friends who share a dream but fall out over money.

THE 39 STEPS (U): Hitchcock's witty take on Buchan's ripping yarn. Robert Donat's smooth bachelor dashes across Scotland pursued by scampering police and ruthless spies.

CURRENT

THE THIN RED LINE (15): A glittering cast of American soldiers lose their sanity in the South Pacific during the Second World War. With Sean Penn and Nick Nolte.

YOU'VE GOT MAIL (PG): Bullet-proof romantic blockbuster with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan who fall in love on the Internet.

TITANIC TOWN (15): Julie Walters excels as a pugnacious Catholic housewife in this grim review of Northern Ireland's Troubles circa 1972. Roger Michell directs.

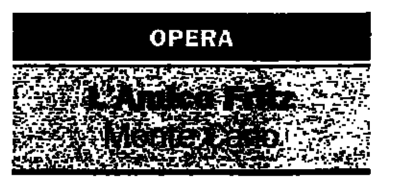
URBAN LEGEND (18): Dire James Blanks horror flick that slashes through an American campus with the help of a migraine-inducing orchestra.

AFFLICTION (15): Paul Schrader's bruising portrait of a frustrated small-town cop. Nick Nolte and James Coburn put in powerful performances as father and son caught in a cycle of male violence.

THIS YEAR'S LOVE (18): David Kane's buzzy comedy charts the mess six Camden Town misfits make of their love lives among the junk stalls.

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15): Romantic comedy with a cracking script by Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard. Gwyneth Paltrow excels as the Bard's cross-dressing muse.

Even the corpse was cheered



OPERA
L'Amico Fritz
Monte Carlo

If there is anything better for a Mascagni enthusiast than a performance of *L'Amico Fritz* — the once enormously successful comedy written just a year after *Cavalleria rusticana* — it is a performance in which the audience gets a second bite at the famous Cherry Duet. In this case, however, it was not an encore or anything premeditated but the result of a mistake by Angela Gheorghiu as Suzel. Having so charmingly picked a bowl of cherries for Roberto Alagna as Fritz, she jumped a few bars ahead, covered her face in horror and refused to continue.

The conductor, Evelino Pido, clearly wanted to go on, but when Alagna started waving at him as well he had no choice but to stop the orchestra and start the whole section again. The audience was delighted. They applauded Gheorghiu when she stopped, applauded Alagna when he blew her a kiss, applauded them both when they got things more or less sorted out. One solitary boo at the end of the performance was the only overt suggestion that anyone was less than happy with what had not, for the Alagna family, been an entirely creditable occasion.

Everyone knows that Gheorghiu and Alagna now come to opera productions on their own terms. It's either that or they don't do it at all. Well, they are worth a compromise here and there and if it means having the sets designed by the tenor's brothers, David and Frederico Alagna, it could even be a good thing. In fact, the design was a fairly harmless thing — unimaginative but authentically 19th-century Alsace in style — until the beginning of the third act. At this point, after a long interval and during an orchestral prelude that is one of the most attractive episodes in the whole score, an exterior wall was precariously and distractingly raised to reveal the interior where the act takes place. The only point of this, it seemed, was to allow Fritz to come out of his front door, pick up a kite and go back in again before the wall was flown out of the way.

Although the symbolism of that event was quite impenetrable, it was welcome if only because it was a sign of life from the director of the production, Fabrizio Melano, who otherwise seemed inclined just to let his singers get on with it. If help was needed even by Gheorghiu and Alagna, who are ill-adjusted in age as the besotted farmer's daughter and the confirmed bachelor landowner, even more help was required by Lorenzo Saccomani as the rabbi whose ambition it is to marry them off. Anna Bonitatibus was more fortunate in that, as a dramatically irrelevant but musically usefully gypsy boy violinist, she had to be no more than conventionally bright and cheerful.

Anyway, with such vocal distinction in the two main roles a persuasive case was made for Mascagni's score. Surprisingly elegant, charmingly intimate, fancifully orchestrated, unfailingly tuneful, conscientiously adapted to the Alsatian setting of the Suardon libretto, it is a disarmingly modest inspiration that could well win friends in this country in anything like an intelligent production. It doesn't really need stars, either.

GERALD LARNER



Despite glitches, Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna could do no wrong in the Monte Carlo audience's eyes

Handel top of the pops

Giulio Cesare
Bordeaux

It's silly to sound surprised, but somehow one still is: the audience sits patiently through nearly four hours of rarefied Baroque opera and then, instead of running for the exits (and dinner) at the witching hour stays to applaud. Not all that long ago operatic Handel was something of a rarity, relished by a chosen few in limited seasons; he is now a mainstream repertory composer, a peer of Mozart, Verdi and Wagner. Put these pieces on properly — with good singers and minimal cuts — and audiences are knocked sideways by the sheer musical riches.

Mind you, any performance has a head start in Victor Louis's Grand Théâtre of 1780, one of the most beautiful opera houses in Europe. Stage and auditorium – capacity slightly more than 1,000 – are built entirely of wood, and the acoustics are gloriously plushy. Indeed, the warmth of the sound produced by the National Orchestra of Bordeaux Aquitaine was slightly surprising in these days of wiry "authentic" sound, but under Jane Glover the playing found a nice balance between the capabilities of modern instruments and proper period manners: buoyant speeds, but pliant phrasing and musical lines really played *through*. Especially satisfying were the vocal embellishments worked out between conductor and singers: they always sounded natural and certainly showed off the voices.

And there were plenty of voices to be shown off. Mireille Delunsch was delicious as Cleopatra: she has a wide range of vocal colour at her command and she is an extremely witty performer, which helps in Handel. Nathalie Stutzmann was Caesar, not a huge voice but very precise in her florid music; Kathleen Kuhlmann was in top form as Cornelia; tiny, vulnerable Isabelle Cals was a vocally assured, touching Sextus. Brian Asawa was less flamboyant a Ptolemy than he had been in the Royal Opera's quickly forgotten effort of last year, and there was another remarkable counter-tenor in Rachid Ben Abdeslam as Nireno.

Alison Chitty's set of translucent panels, beautifully lit by Peter Mumford, had an elegance to match the auditorium, and Stephen Langridge's straightforward production betrayed only moments of unnecessary panic — a peculiar prison scene for *Belle dee* and suddenly, in the context of a generally modern-dress staging, putting the protagonists into full 18th-century fig for the final duet. Unnecessary because all you really need to do with Handel is *sing* him.

RODNEY MILNES

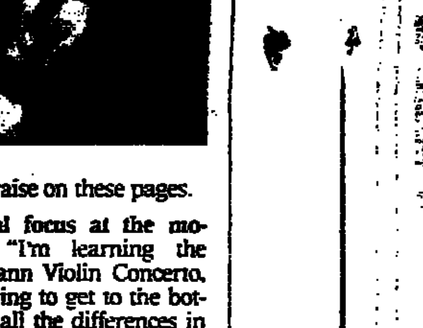
GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

DANIEL HOPE







Profession: Violinist.

Age: 24.

When did it all start? *Very* early. When he was a hyperactive baby, Daniel's parents would take him to open rehearsals for concerts simply to get some peace and quiet. At four, he'd pick up knitting needles and mimic violin playing. "It was clear I needed either a psychiatrist or a violin teacher."

Mentors? After deciding on the latter, Daniel studied for four years with Sheila Nelson, spent two unhappy years, too early, at the Menuhin School, and ended up at the Junior Department for the Royal College of Music. He was spotted by double-bassist Gary Karr who invited him on to his Channel 4 show, and by Dmitri Sitkovetsky who led him to Maxim Vengerov's teacher, Zakhar Bron. But Bron lived in Germany so Hope followed him there, and is now based in Hamburg. While there he met the reclusive Alfred Schnittke shortly before he died, and began an inspiring series of meetings and discussions with the composer.

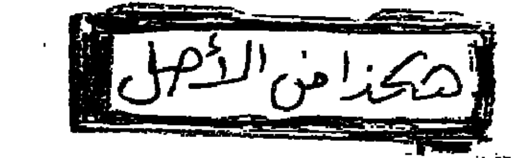
Why the obsession with Schnittke? "Because of the sheer passion of his music, tinged with a certain bleak quality. It's a ticking bomb: seething rage juxtaposed with total numbness. It's so exciting to play!"

First disc? A debut on Chandos with, of course, Schnittke; and also Takemitsu and Weill. Barry Millington gave it three stars of high praise on these pages.

Musical focus at the moment? "I'm learning the Schumann Violin Concerto, and trying to get to the bottom of all the differences in the newly revised version."

Where can we hear him? This Saturday he is directing and playing Mozart Concertos in Roermund, Holland; and on March 20 at 2pm he will be in Borders Bookshop, Oxford Street, London W1.

HILARY FINCH



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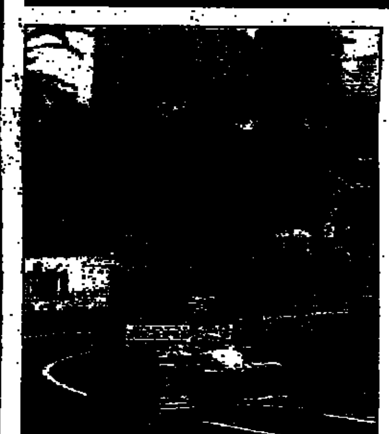
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BONUS POINTS apply to six grands prix during the 1999 Formula One championship, the first of which is the Brazilian Grand Prix. ***Correctly predicting winning driver:*** 100 points; second place: 200 points; third place: 300 points

MAKE THREE SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS BELOW

Damon Hill



David Coulthard



Mika Hakkinen



Michael Schumacher



Eddie Irvine

DRIVERS				CONSTRUCTORS	
GROUP A		GROUP B		GROUP C	GROUP D
01 Mika Hakkinen	07 Eddie Irvine	12 Ralf Schumacher	18 Jarno Trulli	23 McLaren	29 Arrows
02 Michael Schumacher	08 Olivier Panis	13 Heinz-Harald Frentzen	19 Rubens Barrichello	24 Ferrari	30 BAR
03 Damon Hill	09 Giancarlo Fisichella	14 Alexander Wurz	20 Pedro Diniz	25 Williams	31 Stewart
04 David Coulthard	10 Jean Alesi	15 Mika Salo	21 Pedro de la Rosa	26 Jordan	32 Prost
05 Alessandro Zanardi	11 Johnny Herbert	16 Ricardo Zonta	22 Luca Badoer*	27 Benetton	33 Minardi
06 Jacques Villeneuve		17 Marc Gene	*Replaces Norberto Fontana	28 Sauber	

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Follow the instructions on the line and tap in your 12 two-digit selections in turn. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply. You will then be asked to give your Fantasy Formula One team name (maximum 16 characters), together with your own name, address, postcode and daytime telephone number (please note, you need to speak these details). You will receive a 10-digit PIN as confirmation of your entry. You can enter a team at any time until noon on Thursday, April 8, 1999 to qualify for the start of the Brazilian Grand Prix

TO ENTER BY POST

Complete the form, right, with your 12 two-digit selections. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply, the first of these is the Brazilian Grand Prix.

Give your Fantasy Formula One team name (maximum 16 characters), together with your own name, address, postcode and daytime telephone number. Readers in the UK and Republic of Ireland should enclose a sterling cheque for £3 or provide their credit-card details. The entry fee for readers resident outside the UK or Republic of Ireland is £15. Post the form to: The Times NatWest Fantasy Formula One, Abacus House, Dudley St, Luton LU7 1ZZ. You will receive a 10-digit PIN as confirmation of your entry.

For your Fantasy Formula One team to start scoring points at the Brazilian GP, which takes place at Interlagos on April 11, postal entries must be received by first post on Wednesday, April 7, 1999. Entries received after this date will only score points for any remaining grands prix.

THE TIMES NATWEST FANTASY FORMULA ONE ENTRY FORM

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GROUP A AND GROUP B DRIVERS
1st 2nd 3rd

GROUP C AND GROUP D CONSTRUCTORS

Team Name (maximum of 16 characters) ____________

I have read and accept the rules and wish to enter the Fantasy Formula One game.

Signature ____________ Date ____________

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms ________ Initials ________ Age ____
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Surname ____________
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1 Race results will be taken as those standing at midnight on the Sunday of each grand prix. Subsequent changes affecting those results, as decreed by the FIA, will be applied to Fantasy Formula One. 2 Changes of circumstances: If a driver is replaced for any reason you will be deemed to have chosen the new driver; if a driver transfers to another team you will keep that driver as your selection. 3 New drivers become available for transfer as and when they become participants in the Formula One season. 4 In the event of more than one entrant having the same score at the end of the competition a tie break will come into effect to decide the overall prize-winner. 5 In the event of more than one entrant having the same score for an individual race prize, the winner will be selected at random. 6 The computerised record of your entry will be considered to be the entry. Indecipherable, inaudible or incomplete applications will be null and void and no refund will be made. 7 Prizes will only be awarded to teams which comprise three drivers from Group A, three drivers from Group B, three constructors from Group C and three constructors from Group D. 8 There is no limit to the number of teams a person may enter. 9 Telephone entries and transfers are made by Touch-tone (DTMF) telephones only. Entries should take about seven minutes and cost 60p per min. Calls from payphones cost approximately double. 10 Promotional and explanatory copy relating to the game forms part of the terms and conditions for participation. 11 Entrants must be 18 or over. 12 The prize of a TVR Cerbera 4.2 does not include insurance. In the event of the winner being resident outside the UK, he/she will be responsible for all costs associated with arranging delivery from the UK. 13 Normal TNL competition rules apply and the decisions of the editors are final 14 Promoter: News Promotions Ltd, PO Box 495, Virginia Street, London E1 9XY

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Carol Price presents a two-page special report on the annual canine event billed as 'the largest celebration of dogs in the world'

Pet owners who want to be top dogs



Groomed for perfection: Yorkshire terrier Justin, a Best in Show winner, with Osman Sameja

Over the next four days at the Birmingham National Exhibition Centre (NEC), about 110,000 visitors, from both home and abroad, will be flooding into Crufts to witness dog showing at its highest and most prestigious level.

Outside a hairdressers' convention, it is unlikely that they will ever see more collective *snipping, teasing, prinking* and bouffanting in their lives as more than 20,000 dogs are groomed to competitive perfection.

Not everyone who visits Crufts will begin to understand the finer mysteries and requirements of the show ring. But what they will soon discover is that, far from being a quaint and cosy pursuit dominated by retired colonels and matrons from the shires, modern dog shows — and in particular their commercial spin-offs, such as canine foods, accessories, books and grooming products — are now extremely big business.

Indeed, it is commonly, but erroneously, said that modern dog breeders and exhibitors are now "only in it for the money". But in truth, although any dog winning a top show title will increase its stud value overnight, there is really no big money in dog showing itself. Even the highest award in all dogdom — *Supreme Champion at Crufts — carries a winner's* cheque of just £100.

Today's keenest dog exhibitor is just as likely to be a bus driver from Blackpool or a secretary from Sidcup.

Working border collies Ben and Fleece from Wales demonstrate the art of herding ducks

What drives most dog-show enthusiasts is just sheer personal ambition. They are like gamblers, always hoping that the next show is going to be the one where they get a prestigious big win to make up for past disappointments.

This is what keeps them *hammering up and down the* motorway network most weekends, aiming for vital placings at regional shows that will be their passport to Crufts and fulfil fantasies of future glory.

So, while the Kennel Club modestly bills Crufts as "the largest celebration of dogs on earth", equally it is a celebration of uncrushable hope and endurance. The ability of enthusiasts to keep travelling, prinking and parading, day after day, even when they know *only 5 to 10 per cent of* all pedigree dogs bred ever have show potential, is legendary.

Such odds can make competition fierce and give rise to the temptation to enhance cosmetically a dog's natural assets, in the manner of Hollywood starlets a few characteristics short of visual perfection.

In America plastic surgery to improve a dog's appearance is not uncommon, but is banned in all show circles.

However, what exhibitors *are not supposed to do,* but do regardless, is the reason the Kennel Club has warned Crufts competitors this year that it will enforce random coat-testing for any form of dye or colourant, meaning disqualification for the guilty.

After 108 years, Crufts continues to get bigger and bigger, now comprising around 350 trade stands and a wealth of different canine displays on top of the customary show-ring breed competitions.

Sometimes you feel only the very fittest could survive four days trudging round the whole of Crufts: 250,000sq ft of collars and leads, coats, books, ornaments, grooming paraphernalia, bedding, pet food, outdoor clothing and veterinary products, occasionally *broken up by* spectacles of dogs doing everything from herding ducks to hanging off the shoulders of policemen on motorcycles.

Many Crufts old hands now criticise the event for "becoming more of a trade fair than a dog show", without *perhaps* realising how the latter might not have survived without the former, and that a spectacle that costs the Kennel Club £2.3 million to stage has to be paid for somehow.

Undoubtedly, after more than 100 years, much about Crufts has changed. But it is still the only dog show known throughout the world, and the only one that can turn a good dog into a great one overnight.

● *For last minute-Crufts tickets (the show runs March 11-14), contact the NEC box office: 0121-767 4850.*



Wolves in designer clothing

The number of different pedigree dog breeds officially recognised in Britain today tops 160 and keeps growing. On a cursory trip around Crufts, however, you could be forgiven for thinking that many of them have come from different planets — such as the peculiar Mexican hairless dog or the crinkly-skinned oriental shar-pei — let alone gene pools, *writes Carol Price.*

But you would be wrong. Unbelievable as it may sometimes seem, all modern pedigree dogs share their genetic ancestry with just one original species — the wolf. And what you now see as amazing diversity and variety among them is just what happens when you take one basic genetic design and manipulate, mutate and modify it over thousands of years.

Over the years, however, what man has wanted from dogs has kept changing as he dithered between function and fashion. Virtually every pedigree breed was originally evolved for a particular working purpose, be it guarding, hunting, retrieving or herding livestock. But then the novelty of keeping dogs as pets or status symbols took off, and people became more obsessed with what a dog looked like than with what it was supposed to do.

The end result is that the origins and early functions even of this country's most popular pedigree breeds — see the top ten dogs' table above — can be unknown to their owners.

How many might realise, for instance, that the Yorkshire terrier was initially a much bigger dog bred to keep Northern mills clear of rats; that the boxer was primarily a hunting and fighting dog dating back to Middle Ages Bavaria or that the labrador is a relatively recent import from North America, originally developed by Newfoundland seamen to carry useful items back and forth between ship and shore?



Billy, right, and Ali represent the grand bassett griffon vendeen breed which last year, for the first time at Crufts, had its own breed classes

TOP TEN BREEDS

Some 142 different pedigree breeds will be competing at Crufts, the largest entry being golden retrievers (500) and the lowest Hungarian kuvasz (5).

Britain's top ten are:
1. Labrador retriever
2. German shepherd
3. West Highland white terrier
4. Golden retriever
5. Cocker spaniel
6. English springer spaniel
7. Cavalier King Charles spaniel
8. Boxer
9. Staffordshire bull terrier
10. Yorkshire terrier

Source — the Kennel Club

Sometimes the worst thing that can happen to any pedigree breed is that it suddenly becomes fashionable and gains a wide appeal. A wide appeal means it will be overbred — not always by the most scrupulous people — which in turn means a heightened incidence of dogs with genetic faults in health or temperament.

It will also tend to be owned by many people who have acquired it on the basis of its image and looks, while ignorant of the original purpose it was bred for, and how this will govern its everyday needs, instincts and behaviour.

In recent years, two highly energetic breeds — the dalmatian and the border collie — have paid a high price for being fashionable, via film and television promotion, only to be discarded in record numbers once their true natures came to light.

The human appetite for novelty and "improvement" (whether actual or imagined) being what it is, many dog breeders seem unable to stop tinkering with a basic canine design. They either exaggerate certain standard features or make them more extreme, in the worst cases to the detriment of a breed's overall health and physical viability.

A classic example of this is the traditional English bulldog. It was originally a mastiff type bred centuries ago for bull baiting, with a broad head and undershot jaw, enabling it to breathe well while gripping bulls tightly by the nose with its teeth.

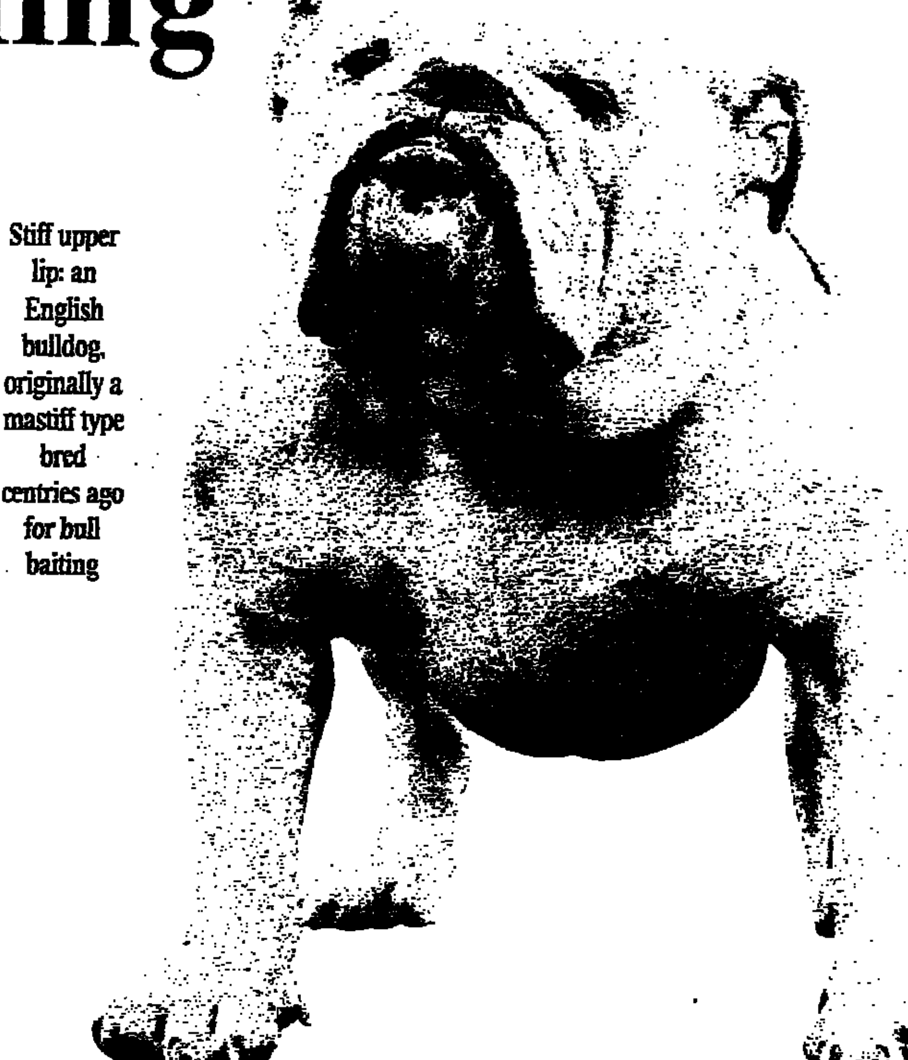
Today's bulldogs bear only a small resemblance to the specimens of old. Exaggeration of facial features means they can be beset by breathing difficulties and their heads have become so large that now many bulldog bitches can only give birth by Caesarean section.

Growing unease, however, about such man-made problems and the genetic price — in terms of health defects — means much is now changing in the modern dog-breeding world, at least at its highest and most scrupulous levels.

Many pedigree varieties have paid for past preoccupations with fashionable or "standard" looks. Breeders are now more focused on constitutional soundness, aided by technology that enables dogs to be screened for genetic defects ranging from malformed hips to impaired vision.

Arguably, being fashionable rather than functional is something most pedigree dogs might prefer not to be. Not that the feelings of the dogs themselves are often taken into account.

● *The author is a specialist canine writer and author of* Understanding The Border Collie: An Essential Pet Owner's Guide, *just published by Broadcast Books (0117-973 2010).*



Stiff upper lip: an English bulldog, originally a mastiff type bred centries ago for bull baiting

TENNIS

Hingis gives Schnyder harsh lesson

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN INDIAN WELLS, CALIFORNIA

WHICHEVER way you choose to look at it, no amount of gurus, diets and alternative therapies can bridge the huge gap between the aspiring hopeful and the established champion. In the early hours of yesterday morning, Martina Hingis taught Patty Schnyder a sharp lesson in how to win a tennis match as she cruised into the quarter-finals of the Evert Cup with a 6-1, 6-3 triumph.

It may have been Schnyder's best performance of the week — the others verged on the poor — but that hardly made up for the result.

Hingis is looking good. She has rediscovered her appetite for competition, is fit and fast and, with one grand-slam title in the bag and the world No 1 ranking back in her possession, she has her eyes set on a raft of titles this year.

"She was reacting really well, she was reading my game, she knew where I was playing," Schnyder said. She should have expected no less. "This is my strength, this is my weapon on the court, this is why I am No 1," Hingis explained.

It took just a few games before Hingis got the measure of Schnyder. They had met only twice, Schnyder winning in Munich in September when Hingis defaulted, injured, in the third set, and again in New York two months later when Hingis got her own back. Both times it was close, but yesterday the result was never in doubt. Long rallies tested the water before Hingis began to apply the pressure. At the merest hint of aggression, Schnyder wilted, mixing stunning winners with some appalling errors. At least it was quick.

Accompanied, as always these days, by Rainer Harnecker, her boyfriend and adviser, Schnyder seemed relieved that it was all over. "She was more confident and I was less confident," was her explanation for the loss.

The lack of belief came, she thought, from the media attention focused on her private life and off-court training methods. "I could not work quietly on my own," she said. Much has been made of her new diet and the two to three litres of orange juice that she drinks every day.

This caused Harnecker to perk up and ask the WTA Tour official to stop such a line of questioning — to no avail. Only when Schnyder deflected all inquiries with a swift "If it didn't work I wouldn't try it" did he calm down.

To judge by their working relationship on court, all is not sweetness and light in the Schnyder camp. Having fired her latest coach last Thursday, she is now practising under the watchful eye of Harnecker, who has no background in tennis. More than once Schnyder — who, with five titles last year and one in 1999, knows something about the game — has given Harnecker short shrift as he has tried to make changes and suggestions. As they prepare for the Lipton Championships, she is leaving open the question of a new coach. "I'll just see what is going to happen," she said.

Hingis knows exactly what is going to happen next. She faces Chanda Rubin, who knocked out Amanda Coetzer, the No 7 seed, 6-4, 6-4. She was not the only seed to fall as Sandrine Testud, seeded No 12, defeated Nathalie Tauziat, the Wimbledon finalist last year and No 8 seed, 7-6, 6-2 in an all-French affair.

In the Newsweek Champions' Cup, Thomas Enqvist, the Australian Open finalist and No 13 seed, fell at the first hurdle, losing to Marat Safin 6-4, 6-4. Andre Agassi never made it that far, forced to withdraw when the hamstring injury that he sustained in Scottsdale last Saturday showed no sign of healing quickly.

Tommy Haas could sympathise. He strained an upper-back muscle during his match with Hicham Arazi and had to withdraw at 5-5 in the first set. That put Arazi through to meet Tim Henman in the early hours of this morning.

John Goodbody meets a teenager breaking new ground



Bully for me: Wendy Owen, of Kimbolton School, Cambridgeshire, who plays first XI hockey — for both the girls' and the boys' team

Girl hockey star who moves in boys' circles

Girls are increasingly breaking down sporting barriers. For years, it was considered unacceptable for females to take part in traditional male activities such as football and basketball. Hockey, however, has been played by both sexes for more than a century. Still, the pace of the boys' game has usually made it too vigorous for a female to be able to play alongside teenage males.

Enter Wendy Owen, who this term has been a regular in the Kimbolton boys' first XI after last term leading the girls' team to the Eastern region finals.

David Elstone, the master-in-charge of hockey at the independent school in Cambridgeshire, has had to warn opposing schools that the Wales under-18 girls' trialist would be in the boys' team.

"No one has objected," he said. "They had probably thought that it would be to their advantage. However, after the game has started, they think 'well, hang on, she's good'. Everyone has commented how talented she is. It's not a gimmick, she's in the first team because she deserves it."

Although the first team is an unusually young one and has been handicapped by injuries, Wendy, 17, has earned her place on merit in a coeducational school of 559 senior pupils, where hockey is the main boys' sport this term.

Elstone said: "If I thought there would have been a safety issue I would not have picked her. I talked extensively to her parents and also to our headmaster who just said 'Why not?'"

Wendy began playing mixed hockey at the age of 9, in her family garden with her father, a former player at

SPORT IN SCHOOLS

Southgate, and her brother, Hugh, who recently represented the West under-21 team. She progressed to being joint captain of Cambridgeshire at under-17 level and a member of the Eastern region development squad. She has played largely as a sweeper where her reading of the game is so valuable, although with the boys' teams, she plays as right marker.

Wendy began playing hockey with the boys at Kimbolton at the age of 15. It is the main sport for girls before Christmas, after which they concentrate on netball, whereas boys play football in the autumn and then switch to hockey in the new year. This arrangement has allowed her to represent both teams.

She says: "It's great fun. When I started there was an attitude of 'What are you doing here?' But after a while they got used to me playing and now it is completely accepted."

But is it accepted by the other boys' schools? "I was really nervous the first time and of course you get comments and looks from some of them. There are also comments from the touchline but generally it's been fine."

Elstone says that her chief talent is that she does not get flustered and marshals the centre of defence to such effect that the Kimbolton girls' team only conceded five goals in regular inter-school matches last term.

She is also valuable for the teams of both sexes with her facility at stopping short corners dead with her stick, allowing a colleague to get in a shot at goal. Wendy recognises that hockey is becoming increasingly physical with an emphasis on fitness and speed. "When you play at female club sides they work out their patterns of play and then you have to run off the ball so much," she said.

Will she continue playing with boys to help her improvement? "Why not? It's fun and I like it."

SNOOKER

Burnett allows Higgins to escape

FROM PHIL YATES IN SHANGHAI

JAMIE BURNETT squandered a gilt-edged opportunity to record the most notable victory of his career when he was beaten 5-4 by John Higgins, the world No 1, in the first round of the China International here last night.

Burnett, who cleared to pink in the seventh frame after gaining a fluked snooker on the last red, led 4-3 and 36-19 in the eighth. While occupying prime scoring territory, though, he missed a straightforward red and Higgins drew level thanks to a 61 break and comfortably added the decider with a well-crafted 111.

"At one point I was sitting there thinking that I'd be going home," Higgins said. "I told myself to stop feeling like that because the likes of Steve Davis and Stephen Hendry would never have been so negative in the same situation when they were top of the rankings.

"That made me fight harder but I still can't believe Jamie gave me a lifeline when he did. Who knows, after surviving something like that, my name could be on the trophy come Sunday."

Like Higgins, John Parrott faced unexpected elimination when, from 3-1 ahead, he trailed Dave Finbow 4-3, but the 1991 world champion constructed half-century breaks in each of the closing two frames for a 5-4 victory, while his little-known opponent failed to pot a ball.

Hendry, handicapped by a badly flaking cue-tip that increasingly limited his shot-making capabilities, held just enough in reserve to beat Anthony Davies 5-2, and now meets Davis, his old adversary, who defeated Quinten Hann, of Australia, 5-1.

Ken Doherty produced the most impressive performance of the round, producing breaks of 115 and 129 in consecutive frames in his 5-0 whitewash of Michael Holt. However, not all members of the top 16 in the world rankings were successful.

Alain Robidoux, of Canada, lost 5-0 to Matthew Stevens and James Wattana was beaten 5-3 by Billy Snaddon.



BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This hand from the Macallan Pairs demonstrates that some "equal" cards are more equal than others.

Dealer South N-S game IMPs

North: ♠ 1076 ♡ Q103 ♢ AQJ942 ♣ 2
West: ♠ KQ9 ♡ A865 ♢ 7 ♣ AJ965
East: ♠ 842 ♡ K2 ♢ 108653 ♣ 743
South: ♠ AJ53 ♡ J974 ♢ K ♣ KQ108

S	W	N	E
Townsend	*Zia*	*Price*	*Robson*
1 C	Pass	1 D	Pass
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Contract: Three No-Trumps by South. Lead: queen of spades.

Declarer took the ace of spades, unblocked the diamond king and led a heart towards dummy, West playing low. It is hardly obvious why declarer should prefer to play one honour rather than the other from dummy on this trick, and in practice Townsend played the ten which lost to the king. East returned a spade, ducked to the ten, and declarer cashed a top diamond, getting the bad news, then cleared the spades. This left the following cards:

North: ♠ – ♡ Q3 ♢ QJ94 ♣ 2
West: ♠ – ♡ A85 ♢ – ♣ AJ96
East: ♠ – ♡ 2 ♢ 1086 ♣ 743
South: ♠ J ♡ J97 ♢ – ♣ KQ10

Declarer needs five more tricks and West (Zia) is on play.

When West cashes the ace of hearts declarer is caught in a "Morton's Fork" dilemma. If he plays low from the dummy, West cashes the ace of clubs and tucks dummy in with the queen of hearts. When declarer elected to unblock the queen, West locked him in hand with a third heart, and eventually came to two club tricks to defeat the contract.

Now give dummy the ten of hearts left in the diagram, instead of the queen. This affords declarer the flexibility to avoid the Fork. Depending on whether or not West cashes the ace of clubs first, he can choose to win the third round of hearts with the ten if he needs to be in dummy, or alternatively overtake it with the jack if he needs to be in hand.

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Runners-up

With Kasparov having already clinched victory in the elite tournament at Linares in Spain, interest now centres on the runner-up.

The race is between Vladimir Kramink, the Russian grandmaster, and Viswanathan Anand, the Indian grandmaster. The winner of the second prize may well be the favourite, now that Kasparov's projected match with Shirov has fallen through, to challenge Kasparov in a world title match later this year. Here are samples of tne two contenders from Linares.

White: Vladimir Kramnik
Black: Peter Svidler
Linares 1999
Grunfeld Defence

	White	Black
1	d4	Nf6
2	c4	g6
3	Nc3	d5
4	cxd5	Nxd5
5	e4	Nxc3
6	bxc3	Bg7
7	Nf3	c5
8	Rb1	0-0
9	Be2	cxd4
10	cxd4	Qa5+
11	Bd2	Qxa2
12	0-0	Bg4
13	Be3	Nc6
14	d5	Na5
15	Bg5	Bxf3
16	Bxf3	Rfe8
17	e5	Nc4
18	d6	Nxe5
19	Bd5	Qe3
20	Bxe7	Bf8
21	Bxb7	Bxe7
22	Bxa8	Bxd6
23	Bd5	Re7
24	Kh1	h5
25	h3	Kg7
26	Qd2	Bc7
27	Rbd1	Nd7
28	Bxf7	Rxf7
29	Qxd7	Rxd7
30	Rxd7+	Kh6
31	Rxc7	Qd3
32	Kg1	Qd4
33	Rc2	Black resigns

Diagram of final position

White: Veselin Topalov
Black: Viswanathan Anand
Linares 1999
Caro-Kann Defence

	White	Black
1	e4	c6
2	d4	d5
3	e5	Bf5
4	Nc3	e6
5	g4	Bg6
6	Nge2	Ne7
7	Nf4	c5
8	h4	cxd4
9	Nb5	Nec6
10	h5	Be4
11	f3	a6
12	Nd6+	Bxd6
13	exd6	g5
14	Nh3	h6
15	fxe4	dxe4
16	Bg2	f5
17	0-0	0-0
18	c3	Qxd6
19	gxf5	exf5
20	Qb3+	Kh8
21	Bxe4	fxe4
22	Rxf8+	Qxf8
23	Qe6	Nd7
24	Qxd7	Rd8
25	Qg4	e3
26	b3	Ne5
27	Qe4	Qf6
28	Kg2	e2
29	Bxg5	hxg5
30	cxd4	Qc6
31	d5	Qxd5
32	Qxd5	Rxd5
33	Re1	Rd2
34	Kf2	Rxa2
35	Rxe2	Nd3+
36	Ke3	Rxe2+
37	Kxe2	g4
38	Ng5	Nc1+
39	Ke3	Nxb3
40	h6	a5
41	Kf4	Nd4
42	Kxg4	a4
43	Kh5	Nc6
	White resigns	

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

ACAROLOGIST
a. A person without a care
b. Collector of bottle-tops
c. Student of mites

FRAG
a. A piece of mosaic
b. A new boy at Harrow
c. To explode one's superior

CREPIS
a. A garden trellis
b. A plant
c. Part of a shoe

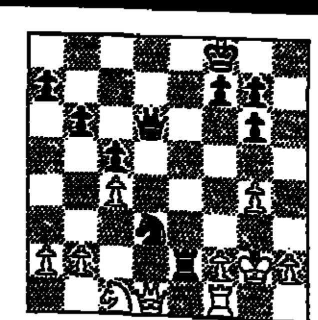
BORBORYGMIC
a. In the ocean depths
b. A rhythmical metre
c. With rumbling stomach

Answers on page 54

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Braga — Lebredo, São Paulo 1998. White has been obliged to accept horrible weaknesses in his kingside. How did Black exploit these?



Solution on page 54

Carl Evans on an amateur rider forecasting Cheltenham glory for his former partner

Pollock adds more grist to Teeton Mill

Teeton Mill's impressive strides to the head of the British steeplechasing scene have not erased all doubts about his chances of winning the Cheltenham Gold Cup next week.

His stamina and robustness are subjects of debate, but few question his jumping, which has been professional, energy saving and efficient. It seems odd that in his first four races as a pointer he unseated his rider and fell twice.

That he has since run 14 times without mishap is due in part to a conversation between an Aintree history-maker and a callow amateur rider who now works as a farrier. Dick Saunders, Teeton Mill's former owner and the oldest man to ride a Grand National winner — he was 48 when successful in 1982 on Grittar — and Ben Pollock, who recorded eight successive victories on the grey, spend a lot of time analysing horses and races.

Pollock was 21 when he took over from Trevor Marks and first rode Teeton Mill in public at the start of the horse's second season. He recalls: "We were 50 lengths clear in a point-to-point at Southwell when he tipped up three from home, so the guv'nor [Saunders] and I tried to work out why the horse kept falling.

"We reckoned it was lack of concentration. He had such a high cruising speed and his jumping was, perversely, so good, that he found it all so easy. We decided to drop him out and make him work to get past the others. After that he kept winning and his jumping got better and better."

Pollock is not surprised by Teeton Mill's progress this year, pointing out that firm ground in recent seasons, and a virus last year, were factors which kept the grey's talents under cover. He is optimistic his old partner will triumph next week, despite those stamina doubts.

"You can pick holes in his form but I don't think he'll get beaten because he doesn't get the trip," Pollock said. "He's won over the distance, and further, and is ideally suited to soft ground. What we don't know is whether he'll be able to win his race by a surge four or five fences out. That's how he has been winning this season, but what will happen if this time they go with him? Will he be beaten for a turn of foot after the last? No one can answer that in advance."

Of the hunter chase defeat by Double Thriller soon after Teeton Mill joined Venetia Williams, Pollock says: "He had been on the same farm since a foal and probably hadn't settled in at his new home. He had a different rider [Seamus Durack] and didn't have the smoothest passage in the race. Nothing empties the tank more than stopping and starting."

Pollock will be in the changing room at Cheltenham while steeplechasing's greatest prize is being fought out. In a twist of luck he has lost out on riding the best chaser in Britain, and found himself riding potentially one of the best.

Castle Mane, unquestionably given an inflated billing because of his association with the team which produced Teeton Mill, has nonetheless put together an unbeaten sequence of seven victories and is favourite to win the Foxhunter Chase, run immediately after the Gold Cup.

His presence in the line-up, bearing in mind the connection, will focus additional attention on a race which tends to be overshadowed. Pollock is looking forward to the prospect, but he is not overawed. He rarely gets ruffled and says he was not disappointed when Teeton Mill was sold, adding: "It was right for the horse."

The meeting at Sedgefield yesterday was abandoned because of waterlogging, and the fixture scheduled for Catterick this afternoon has been lost for the same reason. However, hopes are high for Bangor. The clerk of the course, Michael Webster, said yesterday: "It has been very wet and we are going to omit one fence, but it is dry now and we should be all right."

Being relaxed about life is also Castle Mane's style, according to his rider. "He is one of the nicest horses I've known," Pollock says. "He never questions anything and if he was a person he would give you his last fiver. He's only seven and we really don't know how good he is but he jumps well and will get the trip. He's beaten nothing but the times have been impressive and I was pleased with his first win in a hunter chase at Warwick on Saturday."

Punters keen on Castle Mane's chances should have no fear about Pollock's ability. After all, he would not have been chosen as stable rider by Saunders and his daughter, the trainer Caroline Bailey. You will not get an exhibition of finesse if it comes to a close finish, but you will get a horseman whose unflappable style is an asset on the big occasion.

RICHARD EVANS


Pollock and Teeton Mill, successful eight times in points

MICHAEL POWELL


Pollock combines his engagements as a rider with working as a farrier

Klairon Davis misses Champion Chase

KLAIRON DAVIS, the winner of the Queen Mother Champion Chase in 1996, will miss the race at Cheltenham a week today. The ten-year-old, trained by Arthur Moore, was quoted at 14-1 by bookmakers William Hill, but was found to have an irregular heartbeat after a routine gallop yesterday. "Future plans for him are uncertain," Moore said.

Give It Holly, Aidan O'Brien's Weatherbys Champion Bumper hope, has been destroyed after breaking a leg on the gallops yesterday morning. The five-year-old, O'Brien's sole entry in the £30,000 Cheltenham race, was listed at 8-1 fourth favourite with Coral. Give It Holly finished third on his racecourse debut before winning a bumper in soft ground at Leopardstown on Boxing Day.

The Martin Pipe-trained Golden Alpha, winner of a National Hunt flat race at Newbury last month, is 5-1 favourite for the bumper with Coral, who then bets: 6-1 Alexander Prize and Biliverdin, 8-1 Ingonish, 12-1 Barney Knows, 14-1 Billywill, 16-1 others.

Rockforce will miss the Guinness Arkle Trophy on Tuesday, Paul Nicholls, his trainer, said yesterday. The gelding had landed three novice chases for the Shepton Mallet trainer this term and was to be ridden by the stable jockey, Joe Tizzard, at the Festival.

"He's just had a minor setback, nothing much but he won't be ready to run next week," Nicholls said. "Seeing as he's done so well for us we'll put him away for next season now. With Rockforce missing the race, Joe Tizzard will now switch to my other runner, Flagship Uberalles, who was to have been ridden by Robert Thornton."

[illegible] (Southwell)

THUNDERER

1.40 Shepherds Rest. 2.10 Two On The Bridge. 2.40 Be Warned. 3.10 Brenda Dee. 3.40 AA-Youknownothing. 4.10 Samwar. 4.40 Complimentary.

GOING: STANDARD — SIS
DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

1.40 PIGEON APPRENTICES HANDICAP (£2,183: 1m 6f) (11 runners)

101 (7) /45- BAHIA BLANCA SUN 140 J Eyre 4-9-10 ... D Young (6) 52
102 (9) 4611 BIGWIG 8 (B) G L Moore 6-9-8 (5ex) ... D Hayden (4) 47
103 (8) 052- YANSHAN 208 Bob Jones 4-8-5 ... Gemma Jones (5) 23
104 (6) 0/0/ DARU 33J (D,F,G,S) R Hollinshead 10-9-4 ... P M Quinn —
105 (2) 0-60 CAROL AGAIN 8J (CD) N Bycroft 7-8-13 ... P Clarke 26
106 (5) 4210 KATIE'S CRACKER 27 (BF,C,D) M Quinn 4-8-12 D Mason [illegible]
107 (11) 3/3/ SHEPHERDS REST 21J S Mellor 7-8-9 ... Emily Joyce (4) —
108 (1) 460- WHAT THE DEVIL 98 J Smith 6-8-8 ... R Thomas (4) —
109 (3) 42-4 MRS PICKLES 5J M Usher 4-8-7 ... W Hutchinson (4) 45
110 (10) 540- NUBILE 282 (F) W Musson 5-8-7 ... S Curtis 54
111 (4) -230 DOUBLE ECHO 12 (C,F,G,S) J Bethell 11-8-6 L Gueller (5) 43

2-1 Bigwig, 5-1 Yanshan, Mrs Pickles, 6-1 Double Echo, 10-1 Katie's Cracker, 12-1 Carol Again, Shepherds Rest, 14-1 others.

2.10 HERON MAIDEN HANDICAP (Div I: £2,271: 1m 3f) (12 runners)

201 (7) 2-52 YES KEEMO SABEE 12 D Shaw 4-9-10 ... L Newton 63
202 (5) 0-64 MARK TIME 8 P Hedger 4-9-3 ... A Clark 71
203 (9) 00-0 RUBAMMA 22J (B) D Murray Smith 4-8-13 ... C Lowther [illegible]
204 (4) 00-4 RIGOLETTO 12 C Thornton 4-8-12 ... Dean McKeown 72
205 (3) 3439 TWO ON THE BRIDGE 18 J Given 5-8-8 ... A Culhane 74
206 (1) 2-33 WESTERN COMMAND 19 M Prescott 3-8-5 ... G Duffield 69
207 (8) 4-45 TIME FOR LAGER 32 J Wharton 4-8-2 ... F Norton 61
208 (11) 30-0 THE CANNIE ROVER 12 M W Easterby 4-7-13 Dale Gibson —
209 (6) 240- SPECIALIZE 51J (B) K Burke 7-7-12 ... J Quinn —
210 (10) 00-0 EIFFEL TIGER 18 Bob Jones 4-7-10 ... Martin Dwyer 68
211 (12) 06-0 LADY COLDUNELL 26 N Callaghan 3-7-10 ... G Bardwell 62
212 (2) -050 TIERRA DEL FUEGO 16 (V) H Collingridge 5-7-10 ... P M Quinn (7) 53

3-1 Western Command, 7-2 Yes Keemo Sabee, 6-1 Two On The Bridge, 7-1 Mark Time, 8-1 Time For Lager, 10-1 Rigoletto, Lady Coldunell, 16-1 others.

2.40 SWAN CLAIMING STAKES (£2,097: 1m 4f) (8 runners)

301 (5) 2431 ALSAHIB 16 (CD) W Muir 6-9-7 ... Martin Dwyer 57
302 (7) 3400 BE WARNED 23 (V,C,F,G,S) J Pearce 8-9-7 ... K Fallon [illegible]
303 (3) 24-0 TROJAN RISK 12 (F,S) Mrs M Reveley 6-9-7 ... A Culhane 59
304 (4) 051 ABSOLUTE MAJORITY 21 P Howling 4-9-1 ... J Quinn 71
305 (8) 4 WESTORM 15 Miss G Kelleway 8-9-1 ... G Duffield —
306 (2) 2/05 ZAHIR 16 R Marvin 5-8-13 ... T G McLaughlin —
307 (6) 112- STATE APPROVAL 271 (BF,CD,F) Miss S Wilton 6-8-9 ... C Carver (5) 76
308 (1) 40/0 DIGITAL OPTION 26 (V) Mrs N Macauley 5-8-7 ... A Polli (3) —

2-1 Be Warned, 3-1 State Approval, 4-1 Absolute Majority, 9-2 Alsahib, 10-1 Trojan Risk, 12-1 Westorm, 33-1 Zahir, 50-1 Digital Option.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Sir M Prescott, 25 winners from 84 runners, 29.8%; Miss S Wilton, 11 from 40, 27.5%; W Haggas, 7 from 31, 22.6%; M Johnston, 43 from 220, 19.5%; J Baals, 7 from 36, 19.4%.
JOCKEYS: C Carver, 7 winners from 17 rides, 41.2%; R FitzPatrick, 8 from 28, 28.6%; N Day, 8 from 37, 21.6%; K Fallon, 20 from 94, 21.3%; N Pollard, 6 from 32, 18.8%; P Fredericks, 5 from 28, 17.9%.

3.10 HERON MAIDEN HANDICAP (Div II: £2,258: 1m 3f) (11 runners)

401 (7) 004- U K MAGIC 56J J Jenkins 4-9-10 ... A Culhane 58
402 (1) 3-35 IKRAM BOY 4 A Bailey 5-9-2 ... J Bosley (7) 66
403 (5) 5030 MERRY PRINCE 22 (V) P Hedger 4-9-1 ... Dane O'Neill 73
404 (9) 0-00 SOCIETY KING 23 J Baals 4-8-12 ... P Bradley (7) 60
405 (3) 00-6 KEEN COMPANION 30 T Naughton 6-8-11 ... G Duffield —
406 (4) 3332 GOLDEN LYRIC 12 (BF) J Pearce 4-8-5 ... A Polli (3) [illegible]
407 (11) -323 KING FLYER 13 H Collingridge 3-8-3 ... T Williams 62
408 (10) -330 BRENDA DEE 11 A Jarvis 3-8-2 ... Martin Dwyer 67
409 (2) 6-05 NORTH OF KALA 13 (B) G L Moore 6-7-12 ... F Norton 56
410 (6) 00-0 BROUGHTON SIREN 26 W Musson 4-7-10 ... J Quinn 42
411 (8) -004 SUPER-GEM 27 J Wainwright 4-7-10 ... G Bardwell 54

3-1 Ikram Boy, 7-2 North Of Kala, 5-1 Golden Lyric, 8-1 Society King, King Flyer, 10-1 U K Magic, Merry Prince, Brenda Dee, 25-1 others.

3.40 RAVEN HANDICAP (£3,701: 5f) (13 runners)

501 (4) 010- DIL 160 (D,F,G) Mrs N Macauley 4-10-0 ... P McCabe 95
502 (8) 322- BILKO 161 (BF,D,F,S) D Nicholls 5-9-8 ... P Clarke (7) 90
503 (12) 5211 MAITEAMIA 2 (B,C,D,G,S) S Bowring 6-9-6 (6ex) J Quinn 92
504 (5) 0-56 DAAWE 14 (V,BF,CD,F,G,S) J Glover 8-9-3 ... S D Williams 103
505 (2) 00-5 TIME TO FLY 19 (B,C,D) B Murray 6-8-13 ... D Sweeney 87
506 (11) -024 PALACEGATE JACK 14 (B,CD,F,G,S) J Berry 8-8-11 ... P Bradley (7) 91
507 (1) 4112 TROJAN GIRL 15 (D) N Littmoden 3-8-8 ... T G McLaughlin 88
508 (9) 0-32 AA-YOUKNOWNOTHING 21 (D,S) Miss J Craze 3-8-7 ... T Williams 85
509 (3) 3600 ALJAZ 11 (C,D,S) Miss G Kelleway 9-8-6 ... P Fredericks (5) 90
510 (6) 1346 SQUIRE CORRIE 8 (B,D,F,G,S) D Chapman 7-8-5 ... J Fanning [illegible]
511 (13) 0-02 SILK COTTAGE 42 (B,D,F) R Bastiman 7-8-1 ... P Fessey 86
512 (10) -413 TINKER'S SURPRISE 42 (B,BF,D,F) J Balding 5-7-11 ... N Carlisle 97
513 (7) 0420 RUDE AWAKENING 2 (B,C,D,F) C Fairhurst 5-7-10 ... I Grantham (7) 97

4-1 Bilko, 5-1 Maiteamia, 6-1 Aa-Youknownothing, 7-1 Palacegate Jack, Trojan Girl, 8-1 Daawe, 12-1 Squire Corrie, 14-1 others.

4.10 JAY SELLING STAKES (£1,914: 6f) (11 runners)

601 (4) 2211 BOLD ARISTOCRAT 16 (CD) R Hollinshead 8-9-12 ... P M Quinn (7) 73
602 (7) 1340 SUE ME 12 (CD,F,S) D Nicholls 7-9-12 ... Alex Greaves 78
603 (8) 00-0 ARAB GOLD 12 M Quinn 4-9-7 ... F Norton —
604 (6) 3054 HYPERICO 4 Miss S Wilton 5-9-7 ... N Pollard (3) 51
605 (1) 3542 ICE AGE 9 (B,CD,F) R Williams 5-9-7 ... J Quinn 76
606 (3) 0200 LITTLE IBNR 4 (V,CD,F) P Evans 8-9-7 ... K Fallon 70
607 (9) 2-24 SAMWAR 7 (V,D,G) Mrs N Macauley 7-9-7 ... P McCabe [illegible]
608 (10) 00-0 MISS SHANNON 16 R Fahey 4-9-2 ... R Winston (3) —
609 (11) 00 CADMUS 37 D Chapman 3-8-7 ... A Culhane —
610 (5) 0-06 GREY STRIKE 7 (B) J Berry 3-8-7 ... Iona Wands (5) 53
611 (2) 5636 LADY CAROLINE 14 (D) M Johnston 3-8-7 R FitzPatrick (5) 75

11-4 Bold Aristocrat, 3-1 Samwar, 7-2 Sue Me, 11-2 Lady Caroline, 10-1 Ice Age, 14-1 Little Ibnr, Grey Strike, 20-1 others.

4.40 PEACOCK HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £2,379: 7f) (16 runners)

1 (9) 3510 WEET U THERE 28 (D) R Hollinshead 9-7 ... A Culhane 59
2 (4) 16-0 VALE OF LEVEN 33 (CD,S) K Ryan 9-7 A McCarthy (3) 57
3 (16) 04-0 REPUBLIC 12 J Hetherton 9-4 ... M Tebbutt 57
4 (13) 4322 CARRIE POOTER 12 (B,F) T Barron 9-3 ... O Pears 44
5 (5) -243 RICH BALLERINA 12 (CD) O Carroll 9-3 ... R FitzPatrick (5) [illegible]
6 (1) 600- TAKER CHANCE 82 J Hetherton 8-12 ... N Carlisle 64
7 (15) 4422 SHADY DEAL 6 M Usher 8-12 ... W Hutchinson (7) 65
8 (6) 400- DISPOL TRUMP 214 P Calver 8-8 ... G Duffield 41
9 (2) 60-6 VIRBIUS 12 J Hetherton 8-6 ... R Lappin 39
10 (7) -224 COMPLIMENTARY 28 (V) W Haggas 8-6 ... J Quinn 56
11 (14) 000- SHALARI 128 J Eyre 8-5 ... C Lowther 53
12 (8) -504 STANLEY WIGFIELD 16 D Nicholls 8-5 ... F Norton 38
13 (12) 3020 SHARP RHYTHM 9 M Johnston 8-3 ... J Fanning 47
14 (10) 5-03 DOVEDON TIMES 23 H Akbary 8-3 ... N Day 53
15 (11) 6360 E B PEARL 40 N Bycroft 7-12 ... Martin Dwyer 56
16 (3) 0584 ABSTRACT 21 J Wainwright 7-10 ... G Bardwell 62

5-1 Shady Deal, 7-1 Vale Of Leven, Complimentary, Dovedon Times, 8-1 Sharp Rhythm, 10-1 Weet U There, Carrie Pooter, 12-1 others.

BANGOR

THUNDERER

2.20 Iranos — 3.50 Aussie Bob
2.50 HIGH ISLAND (nap) — 4.20 Red Rebel
3.20 Hoodwinker — 4.50 Hardacre

Timekeeper's top rating: 2.50 PRUSSIA.

Carl Evans: 4.20 Shady Emma.

GOING: CHASES: HEAVY; HURDLES: SOFT — SIS

2.20 'TOP JOCKEY' NOVICES CHASE (£3,355: 2m 1f 110yd) (4 runners)

1 102F-4 IRANOS 71 (D,S) (B Kilpatrick) M Pipe 7-11-1 ... A P McCoy —
2 0030/2 KISSAIR 23 (D,S) (T Benson) N Henderson 8-11-1 ... M A Fitzgerald [illegible]
3 /350P0 ROYRACE 25 (A Evans) W Brisbourne 7-11-1 ... R Massey —
4 /PPPP- MISS MIGHTY 310P (R Luders-Gibbs) Mrs T Luders-Gibbs 6-10-10 ... X Aizpuru (3) —

BETTING: 8-11 Iranos, EVENS Kissair, 66-1 Royrace, 200-1 Miss Mighty.

1998: CENTAUR EXPRESS 6-11-1 T Eley (7-2) A Streeter 6 ran

Iranos 19l 4th of 8 to Time For Action in handicap hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good to soft). Kissair 7l 2nd of 4 to Kingsfold Pet in novice chase at Plumpton (2m 2f, soft); previously 23l 20th of 28 to Big Strand in handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 5f, good to firm). Royrace 62l 8th of 10 to Samakaan in novice hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft).

KISSAIR and Iranos look to have this between them with preference for the former

2.50 WREXHAM LVA NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£3,929: 3m 110yd) (11 runners)

1 613121 PRUSSIA 12 (F,S) (Prussia Partnership) W Clay 8-11-10 ... G Tormey [illegible]
2 03P-0P KING PADDY 30 (Mrs S Evans) Mrs S Johnson 7-11-2 ... R Johnson —
3 445340 COPPEEN JEWEL 25 (D,F) (F Coulson) J J O'Neill 6-11-0 ... R McGrath —
4 352224 SANTA JET 21 (D,F,S) (G Edwards) G M Moore 8-10-11 ... J Callaghan 105
5 44-630 ALASKAN HEIR 26 (V,G,S) (J Barton) A Streeter 8-10-4 ... Gary Lyons 100
6 2/3P0U LOCH GARMAN HOTEL 74 (D,F,G,S) (D Hall) P Dalton 10-10-3 ... C Maude —
7 3-P0P5 KENTUCKY GOLD 22 (D,G,S) (Halewood Intl) Mrs L Williamson 10-10-2 ... Mr D Sherlock 99
8 P1-0P2 GOLDEN FILM 7 (D,S) (Mrs M Llewellyn) B Llewellyn 11-10-2 ... S Wynne —
9 21-F54 HIGH ISLAND 104 (S) (Mr & Mrs W Williams) Mrs M Reveley 8-10-1 ... Mr A Dempsey (3) 94
10 0P-F0P COOLEST BY PHAR 20 (W Deacon, P Teal & K Mantel) Mrs P Ford 7-10-0 R Wakley 73
11 0P5684 FASTINI GOLD 7 (B,F) (A Price) R J Price 7-10-0 ... J Mogford (7) 86

BETTING: 11-4 Prussia, 3-1 Santa Jet, 7-2 High Island, 5-1 Alaskan Heir, 12-1 Coppeen Jewel, Golden Film, 14-1 Fastini Gold, 25-1 others.

1998: HOODWINKER 9-11-10 C Llewellyn (8-1) W Jenks 10 ran

Prussia beat Royal Arctic 20l in 10-runner handicap hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 5f 110yd, soft); previously 2½l 2nd of 12 to Brambles Way in claiming hurdle at Leicester (2m, heavy). Coppeen Jewel 35l 10th of 16 to Exalted in handicap hurdle at Ayr (2m 4f, soft); previously 11l 4th of 11 to Jowoody in handicap hurdle at Market Rasen (3m, heavy). Santa Jet 18l 4th of 8 to Gale Force in handicap chase at Musselburgh (3m, good to firm); previously 5l 2nd of 9 to Tom's River in handicap chase at Catterick (3m 1f 110yd, soft). Alaskan Heir beaten a distance 7th of 15 to Fall Of Oats in handicap chase at Bangor (3m 6f, good to soft); previously 22l 3rd of 13 to Smarty in handicap chase at Leicester (2m 7f 110yd, soft). Kentucky Gold beaten a distance 5th of 15 to Turnpole in novice chase at Sedgefield (3m 3f, good). Golden Film 5l 2nd of 16 to Pridewood Fuggle in selling handicap hurdle at Chepstow (2m 110yd, heavy). High Island 35l 4th of 7 to Scotia Nostra in novice chase at Carlisle (2m 4f 110yd, heavy); previously 53l 5th of 12 to Master Nova in novice chase at Newcastle (3m, good to soft). Fastini Gold beaten a distance 4th of 9 to Belly Lira in novice chase at Chepstow (3m, heavy).

HIGH ISLAND is relatively unexposed and could prove well treated on this switch to handicap company

3.20 TILNEY INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT HANDICAP CHASE (£4,026: 3m 110yd) (5 runners)

1 335423 PARSONS BOY 16 (CD,G,S) (B Ridge & D Hewitt) N Richards 10-12-0 ... A Dobbin 125
2 1F0-PP LUV-U-FRANK 58 (D,F,G,S) (F Farrant) M Pipe 10-11-13 ... A P McCoy —
3 451FR2 HOODWINKER 15 (CD,G,S) (P Howell) W Jenks 10-11-4 ... Gary Lyons 103
4 1-3FP3 MR MAGNETIC 26 (S) (Mrs A Wood) H Daly 8-11-2 ... R Johnson [illegible]
5 32143F MISTER BLAKE 28 (CD,F,G,S) (W Edwards) R Lee 9-10-9 ... M A Fitzgerald 122

BETTING: 5-2 Mr Magnetic, 11-4 Mister Blake, 3-1 Parsons Boy, 7-2 Hoodwinker, 10-1 Luv-U-Frank.

1998: PARSONS BOY 9-12-0 A Dobbin (14-1) G Richards 6 ran

Parsons Boy 9½l 3rd of 7 to The Next Waltz in handicap chase at Carlisle (3m 2f, heavy); previously 18l 2nd of 5 to Peter in handicap chase at Newcastle (3m 6f, heavy). Hoodwinker 2½l 2nd of 18 to Mister Generosity in handicap hurdle at Ludlow (3m 2f 110yd, good to soft). Mr Magnetic 1½l 3rd of 16 to Fall Of Oats in handicap chase at Bangor (3m 6f, good to soft) with Mister Blake (2lb better off) fell 12th. Mister Blake 31l 3rd of 6 to Grizzly Bear in amateur riders handicap chase at Warwick (3m2f, soft) on penultimate start.

Course-and-distance winner MISTER BLAKE can make amends after falling last time out

3.50 WILLIAM HILL NOVICES HURDLE [SHOWCASE HANDICAP] (£5,225: 2m 4f) (8 runners)

1 66-21U AUSSIE BOB 12 (BF,D,G) (Mrs S Smith) Mrs S Smith 7-12-0 ... S Durack 51
2 111424 SELBERRY 18 (G,S) (Mr & Mrs D Bell) E L James 5-11-10 ... Mr N Fehily (7) 97
3 234631 ROKER JOKER 26 (CD,S) (Mrs P Hutchinson) R Peacock 8-11-4 ... C Webb [illegible]
4 -64F00 COMMANCHE HERO 20 (S) (P Holder) R Dickin 6-11-1 ... A P McCoy 74
5 5304F1 COURT ORDEAL 18 (S) (Time & Leisure Ltd) R N Bevis 4-10-8 ... Mr R Forristal (5) 97
6 AU05-5 MAZZELMO 11 (Miss E Oats) A Bailey 6-10-8 ... S Wynne 21
7 PP-031 PRIDEWOOD FUGGLE 7 (S) (Mrs B Morris) R J Price 9-10-0 (7ex) ... R Johnson 96
8 R0P0 MORTS LITTLE HEN 23 (T Morton) T Morton 6-10-0 ... J Mogford (7) —

BETTING: 15-8 Aussie Bob, 9-4 Roker Joker, 11-2 Court Ordeal, 13-2 Pridewood Fuggle, 7-1 Selberry, 10-1 Commanche Hero, 12-1 Mazzelmo, 150-1 Morts Little Hen.

1998: PALLADIUM BOY 8-10-7 A P McCoy (7-2 fav) M Pipe 17 ran

Aussie Bob with winner when unseated rider last in 10-runner handicap hurdle won by Prussia at Market Rasen (2m 5f 110yd, soft), previously beat Native Buck 14l in 19-runner novice handicap hurdle at Wetherby (2m 4f 110yd, good). Selberry 16l 4th of 7 to Magic Combination in handicap hurdle at Ascot (2m 4f, good to soft): previously 3l 2nd of 13 to Shannon Saxon in novice handicap hurdle at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, soft). Roker Joker beat The Negotiator 9l in 17-runner novice handicap hurdle at Bangor (2m 4f, good to soft), previously 13l 3rd of 16 to Pichet Place in novice handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 1f, soft). Commanche Hero 23l 7th of 18 to Tempestuous Lady in novice handicap hurdle at Sandown (2m 6f, good). Court Ordeal beat Ellerbeck neck in 10-runner 4yo novice hurdle at Carlisle (2m 1f, heavy). Mazzelmo beaten a distance 5th of 14 to Rash Remark in maiden hurdle at Haydock (2m 6f, soft). Pridewood Fuggle beat Golden Film 5l in 16-runner selling handicap hurdle at Chepstow (2m 110yd, heavy). Morts Little Hen 68l 11th of 15 to Dublin River in maiden claiming hurdle at Hereford (2m 3f 110yd, good to soft)

AUSSIE BOB looked the likely winner when unseating at the last latest and is worth another chance

4.20 HUGH PEEL CHALLENGE TROPHY HUNTERS CHASE (£1,674: 3m 110yd) (10 runners)

1 P12-64 MR BUSKER 25 (CD,F,S) (C Barlow) P Morris 10-12-7 ... Mr C J B Barlow (7) [illegible]
2 1F11-2 RED REBEL 24P (D,G,S) (Mrs M Moody) T Walford 7-12-7 ... Mr N Wilson 20
3 311-P2 SHADY EMMA 17P (CD,G,S) (D Pugh) G Edwards 7-12-2 ... Mr S Prior (7) 61
4 /F5P-1 BASIL STREET 11P (D,S) (B Jackson) S Flook 7-12-0 ... Mr T Dennis (7) —
5 S-P5UP CANISTER CASTLE 17P (D,F) (J Price) F Matthews 11-12-0 ... Mr D Sherlock (7) —
6 4/43-6 COMMERCIAL ARTIST 11 (D,G,S) (L Morgan) D McCain 13-12-0 ... Mr C Bonner 70
7 4FPP/P DANNIGALE 24P (B,D,G) (E Haddock) E Haddock 13-12-0 ... Mr N Sidins (7) —
8 3245P- MAN MOOD 319 (G,S) (J Robbins) E Haddock 8-12-0 ... Mr G Hanmer (5) —
9 31/12- SARCOID 325P (D,F,S) (S Rammell) G Hanmer 9-12-0 ... DOUBTFUL —
10 112-22 STRETCHIT 25P (BF,D,G,S) Miss T McCurrich 9-12-0 ... Miss T McCurrich (7) —

BETTING: 2-1 Stretchit, 11-4 Shady Emma, 7-2 Red Rebel, 9-2 Basil Street, 8-1 Commercial Artist, 10-1 Mr Busker, 25-1 others.

1998: MR BUSKER 9-12-0 Mr C J B Barlow (evens fav) P Morris 6 ran

Mr Busker 38l 4th of 10 to Varykinov in hunter chase at Haydock (3m, soft). Red Rebel beat Rusty Fellow 16l in 5-runner novice hunter chase at Uttoxeter (3m 2f, good) with Canister Castle (7lb better off) 56l 5th. Shady Emma beat Lord Harry neck in 11-runner hunter chase at Bangor (3m 110yd, good). Basil Street 15l 4th of 10 to Hand Woven in 4yo fillies novice hurdle at Newton Abbot (2m 6f, good to firm). Commercial Artist 40l 6th of 8 to Mouse Bird in handicap chase at Haydock (2m 4f, soft). Stretchit 80l 6th of 10 to Young Kenny in amateur novice hurdle at Cartmel (3m 2f, soft).

RED REBEL, a creditable second in a men's open at Wetherby last month, should give a good account

4.50 CHIRK NH NOVICES HURDLE (£2,654: 2m 1f) (9 runners)

1 45-1P HARDACRE 90 (S) (Sir Simon Green) T Tate 5-11-8 ... J Callaghan —
2 0-06 ALTHREY RULER 26 (F Lloyd) W Clay 6-11-2 ... G Tormey 82
3 3-0443 CAIUS 9 (Mr & Mrs J Riley) J Jefferson 6-11-2 ... T Siddall (5) [illegible]
4 0PF CASA FINA 8 (P Masters) M Pipe 6-11-2 ... C Maude —
5 014- HAREM SCAREM 358 (D,S) (Halewood Int. Ltd) M Pipman 8-11-2 ... C Llewellyn —
6 00 THE UGLY GUNNER 48 (Champ Chicken Co Ltd) D McCain 6-11-2 ... A C Coyle (5) —
7 0-035 WILL SCARLET 32 (J Cresswell) J K Cresswell 5-11-2 ... D Forth (3) 45
8 04-2 COLMARANN 25 (K Fisher) Mrs S Smith 7-10-11 ... S Durack 86
9 005P- WOODY SCUD 322 (Mrs J Pickering) J Pickering 7-10-11 ... Gary Lyons —

BETTING: 5-2 Colmarann, 11-4 Caius, Harem Scarem, 9-2 Hardacre, 12-1 Casa Fina, 16-1 Althrey Ruler, 25-1 Will Scarlet, 66-1 others.

1998: KADOU NONANTAIS 5-11-8 J A McCarthy (4-7 fav) O Sherwood 11 ran

Hardacre pulled up in novice hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, heavy), previously beat Ryalux 4l in 10-runner novice hurdle at Hexham (2m, heavy). Althrey Ruler 30l 6th of 15 to Guilder in novice hurdle at Bangor (2m 1f, good to soft), previously 16l 12th of 13 to Polar Champ in novice hurdle at Bangor (2m 1f, good to soft). Caius 22l 3rd of 20 to Patras in maiden hurdle at Newcastle (2m, soft), previously 9¾l 4th of 20 to Chief Wardance in novice hurdle at Newcastle (2m, good to soft). Harem Scarem 27l 4th of 18 to Young Cal in maiden hurdle at Limerick (2m 1f, soft). Will Scarlet 31l 5th of 14 to Ricardo in novice hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, heavy). Colmarann 1½l 2nd of 14 to My Desperado in mares novice hurdle at Catterick (2m, good); previously 18l 4th of 18 to Bora Bora in mares national hunt flat at Bangor (2m 1f, good to soft).

COLMARANN shaped well on her reappearance and looks up to winning a race of this nature

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
J Jefferson	5	17	29.4	R Wakley	3	11	27.3
M Pipe	24	93	25.8	A McCoy	14	63	22.2
Mrs M Reveley	4	21	19.0	C Llewellyn	11	68	16.2
R Dickin	4	24	16.7	R McGrath	3	21	14.3
G M Moore	3	20	15.0	G Tormey	4	28	14.3
R Lee	4	27	14.8	R Johnson	10	85	11.8
J J O'Neill	7	48	14.6	A Dobbin	5	45	11.1

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Bangor: 4.20 Dannigale. Southwell: 2.10 Rubamma, Specialize. 3.10 North Of Kala. 4.40 Complimentary.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Jackpot won

The Tote Jackpot paid £58,480.70 to 8.56 winning tickets at Exeter yesterday. The pool, swelled by either not being won or only partly won at a series of meetings, reached £705,063.36, having begun the day at a little over £274,000.



Exeter

Going: soft, good to soft in places

2.20 (2m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, **TRUE VISION** (A P McCoy, 11-4 fav); 2, **Sandante** (Danny O'Sullivan, 14-1); 3, **Spirit Level** (Mr P Flynn, 10-1). ALSO RAN: 100-30 Summer Flower, 7 Remember Star (4th), 12 Ruby Bear (5th), 14 Pot Blackbird, Veiled Dancer, 16 Henbury Princess, 20 Daisy, 25 Little Films. 11 ran. 19l, 2l, 13l, dist. M Pipe at Wellington. Tote: £4.50; £1.30, £6.30, £3.40. DF: £36.60. CSF: £35.84. Tricast: £303.93.

2.50 (2m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, **POT BLACK UK** (Mr P Flynn, 4-1); 2, **Dawn Spinner** (Mr M Foley, 8-1); 3, **Hasten Bak** (Mr A Holdsworth, 20-1). ALSO RAN: 1-2 Wise Gunner, 16 Roborette (4th), 33 Pancho's Tango (5th), 100 Wicked Game. 7 ran. 7l, 8l, 22l, 3½l. P Hobbs at Minehead. Tote: £4.90; £1.60, £2.00. DF: £14.20. CSF: £28.72.

3.20 (3m 6f ch) 1, **GIGI BEACH** (J Tizzard, 10-1); 2, **Klonahella** (F Kenny, 5-1); 3, **St Mellion Fairway** (A P McCoy, 20-1). ALSO RAN: 7-2 Treasure Again (6th), 9-2 Saleaan, 11-2 True Fortune (5th), 9 Pennymoor Prince (4th), 14 Simpson, 16 Spring Marathon, 25 Maurachas, 40 Red Parade. 11 ran. NR: Secret Bid. 1¼l, 25l, 5l, 4l, 12l. P Nicholls at Shepton Mallet. Tote: £9.00; £1.80, £1.90, £4.90. DF: £27.30. Tote Trifecta: £1,080.40. CSF: £52.85. Tricast: £898.04.

3.50 (2m 3f ch) 1, **DEFENDTHEREALM** (J Frost, 10-1); 2, **Millcroft Regatta** (A Thornton, 14-1); 3, **Blanchland** (C Maude, 50-1). ALSO RAN: 4-6 Bracey Run, 5 Storm Dust, 7 Rashakin, 12 Crack Regiment, 14 Cento, 50 Taco's Revenge, 66 Scarlet Rambler (4th), 100 Fadil (5th). 11 ran. Dist, 13l, 26l, dist. R Frost at Buckfastleigh. Tote: £10.80; £2.20, £2.10, £5.30. DF: £31.70. CSF: £122.64.

4.20 (3m 2f hdle) 1, **LADY OF GORTMERRON** (C Llewellyn, 2-1; Timekeeper's top rating); 2, **Kellys Conquest** (A Thornton, 6-4 fav); 3, **Branscombe** (P Holley, 20-1). ALSO RAN: 4-1 Greycoat Boy (4th), 9 Ezanak, Jazz Duke, 50 Corinthian Gold, 66 Shadirwan (5th), 100 Amothebambo, Sea Minnow (6th). 10 ran. 7l, dist, 10l, 14l, Dist. N Twiston-Davies at Cheltenham. Tote: £3.60; £1.10, £1.20, £2.50. DF: £3.60. CSF: £5.39.

4.50 (2m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, **SUNRISE SPECIAL** (S Burrough, 5-1); 2, **Advance East** (O McPhail, 11-1); 3, **Ranger Sloane** (R Farrant, 6-1). ALSO RAN: 4-6 fav Lizzys First (4th), 8 King Mole (5th), 12 Nobel Lad (6th). 6 ran. 3½l, 2½l, 1l, 10l, 8l. P Rodford at Martock. Tote: £7.20; £1.90, £3.20. DF: £17.40. CSF: £47.57.

Jackpot: £58,480.70.
Placepot: £1,303.70.
Quadpot: £111.10.

☐ **Sedgefield yesterday was abandoned because of waterlogging.**

☐ Jockey Jim Culloty will miss the Cheltenham and Aintree Festivals after breaking his arm in a fall at Exeter yesterday.

EQUESTRIANISM

Award for Bartle completes fine year

By Jenny MacArthur

CHRIS BARTLE, the winner of Badminton last year, on Adrian Cantwell's Word Perfect II, and one of the leading horse trials contenders for the Sydney Olympic Games, was presented with the Spillers National Personality of the Year award at the Knightsbridge Barracks in London yesterday.

Bartle's win last May was memorable on several counts. He was the first British winner of Badminton since 1993; at 46 he was also the oldest. He was also the only winner to have originally made his name in dressage, rather than horse trials.

His sixth place at the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984, on Wily Trout, remains the highest British placing in an Olympic dressage event.

The award — voted for by readers of *Horse & Rider* and *Pony* magazines — completes a frenetic 12 months for Bartle. In addition to his commitments as managing director of the Yorkshire Riding Centre, and dressage trainer to the Great Britain team, he is increasingly in demand to take clinics, both here and abroad. He has recently returned from a six-week stint in Australia. But he relishes his new life. "Everyone dreams about winning Badminton — even now I sometimes have to pinch myself to remind myself it happened," he said.

He is hoping it may happen again. Although Word Perfect, his Olympic prospect, is resting this year, after advice from Andy Bathe, the Britain team vet, and will compete in only a few one-day horse trials in the autumn, Bartle is riding Oscar, his second horse, at Badminton this year. In September, at a rain-soaked Burghley, the 10-year-old slipped up at the Dragon Fence early on the course, but Bartle is happy. "He's a very bold, powerful horse and it's just a matter of organising him," he said.

Other awards yesterday went to Monty Roberts, who was voted the International Personality of the Year for his contribution to horse welfare, and to Rosemary Hobson, a veterinary surgeon, who received the Spillers Diamond award. The Horse of the Year award went to One Man, the top steeplechaser for 1995-96 and 1996-97, whose brilliant career was cut short by his tragic death last year at the age of 10.

☐ Karen Dixon, a member of the bronze medal-winning team at the world three-day event championships in Rome last September, gave birth to a son yesterday.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

FA Cup
Sixth-round replay
Chelsea v Manchester Utd (7.45)

FA Carling Premiership
Blackburn v Everton (7.45)
Derby v Aston Villa (7.45)
Leeds v Tottenham (7.45)
Nottingham Forest v Newcastle (7.45)

Nationwide League
Second division
Stoke v Reading (7.45)

Scottish League
First division
Clydebank v Falkirk

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Midland division: Newport AFC v Paget R (7.45). Solihull Borough v Blakenall, VS Rugby v RC Warwick.
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Challenge Cup: Third round: Hucknall v Altrincham
RYMAN LEAGUE: First division: Molesey v Canvey Island
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Norwich v Barnet (at Colney Training Ground, 2.0). Charlton v Portsmouth (7.0); Colchester v Cambridge (2.0). Ipswich v Brentford (7.0). Northampton v Millwall (2.0); Queens Park Rangers v Luton (2.0). Tottenham v Swindon, Wimbledon v Wycombe
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Aston Villa v Blackburn. **First division:** Port Vale v Middlesbrough (7.0); Tranmere v Barnsley (7.15). **Second division:** Lincoln v Shrewsbury (at Lincoln Utd, 2.0). Wrexham v Huddersfield (2.0). **Third division:** Hartlepool v Wigan (2.0), Hull v Rochdale (2.0). **League Cup: Quarter-finals:** Darlington v Bradford (2.0); Stockport v York (7.0).
LEAGUE OF WALES: Aberystwyth v Carmarthen, Caernarfon v Newtown (7.45). Conwy v Holywell; Cwmbran v Rhyl; Haverfordwest v Rhayader
SCHWEPPES ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Bowers United v East Ham. Eton Manor v Ilford.
COMPLETE MUSIC HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Cirencester Academy v Wantage; EFC Cheltenham v Carterton; Tuffley v Almondsbury.
WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: Premier division: Cray v Crockenhill.
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Yeovil TR v Bridgwater (7.45)
MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Toddington v Hillingdon Borough (8.0)
HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Clachnacuddin v Forres Mechanics, Keith v Rothes, Peterhead v Cove.
JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Stowmarket v Sudbury Wanderers (7.45)
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE CUP: Semi-final, first leg: Cowes Sports v Eastleigh
UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Northampton S v Ford Sports.
UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Hassocks v Redhill. **John O'Hara Cup: Semi-final:** Burgess Hill v Eastbourne Town (at Peacehaven).
NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Hallam v Staveley MW

OTHER SPORT

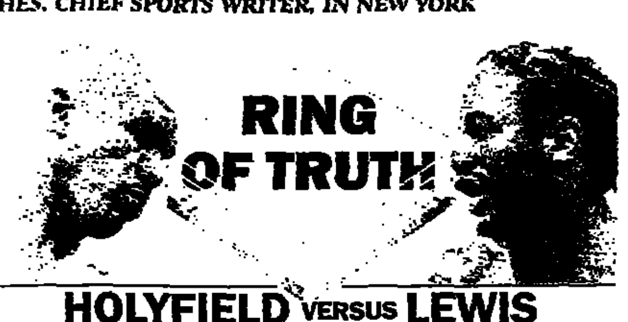
BADMINTON: All-England championships (in Birmingham).
BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Derby Storm v Edinburgh Rocks (8.0)
HOCKEY: Men's representative match Army v British Police (in Portsmouth, 2.30)
RUGBY UNION: AIB League: Second division: Dungannon v Derry (7.0).

Champion ready to risk all to unify division and prove he is heavyweight king of the world

Gladiators in search for high ground

FROM ROB HUGHES, CHIEF SPORTS WRITER, IN NEW YORK

DOWNTOWN Manhattan the morning after Joe DiMaggio has died: the city of New York is in respectful mourning for the baseball icon, and with all the money, all the hype, even all the quasi-religious talk surrounding the undisputed world heavyweight fight between Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis on Saturday, the one thing for certain is that both men, both warriors, would settle for just a fraction of the deep and genuine respect that is felt here for DiMaggio.



So, as Holyfield arrives at the aptly-named Church Street Boxing Gym, as he saunters relaxed and ready through the throng in his workshop of 400 journalists and television crews, have no doubt that beneath the exterior beats the heart of a man who, with $150 million (about £94 million) in the bank, and little of it squandered, the respect and the glory is paramount.

"Train at your own risk," reads the final warning on a blood-red sign inside the spacious gymnasium which, typically, is an underground converted warehouse. On the walls are splendidly lifelike charcoal drawings of Jack Dempsey and Joe Louis, and on Holyfield's back is a blonde masseuse. She begins kneading the shoulders, which look as if they are hewn out of black marble. He is rolling the neck muscles, savouring the photographers who, few by few, are led into a back room for their allotted glimpse of the senior warrior.

"You know, Lewis has a real chance," Tony Signore, himself a New Yorker, a former habitué of the gym where Holyfield began, said. "Your man [Lewis] has so much power and, sooner or later, someone is going to take advantage of the fact that Holyfield is at the end.

"It's not age [Holyfield is a well-preserved 36], it's the wars, the mileage. Up to your twentieth fight, they put you in with pancakes. But I was right there when Holyfield had his first fight, it was a four-round war, and nothing's gotten any easier for him since."

However, he relishes boxing wars, this extraordinary champion Holyfield. He has twice intimidated Mike Tyson, bullied the most bestial bully in the fight game. He has had a heart scare that would have terminated the desire of 99 out of a hundred boxers, especially those living with a doctor for a wife and living in such opulent luxury.

It is not about age, Signore said. If it was, then Holyfield could look across New York, to Madison Avenue on 76th Street, where this week, and at the same hour on the same night as he will be doing business in Madison Square Garden, Eartha Kitt is purring on stage at the Café Carlyle. The lady is exactly twice the age of the champ.

As Holyfield's rhythm builds in Church Street, as the smell of stale sweat refills the gymnasium, the Americans who have been around him these past months say that Holyfield has been boxing. He has spoken relentlessly of respecting the power, the big hitting, of Lewis — and Lewis has talked of catching him on the temple, the side of the head, which has been Holyfield's vulnerable spot.



'Holyfield still has no thoughts that this will be his last'

Yet he has not trained not against bulk, but against smaller, lighter, swifter opponents. Speed, he reasons silently, could be of the essence. It will be his speed at getting inside the appreciably longer reach of Holyfield that could determine who is, come Sunday morning, the undisputed heavyweight king of the world.

When Holyfield speaks, it is neither with the air of the preacher man that he has been labelled nor with any apparent concern for what is to come. He has been defending himself, and attacking opponents from the age of eight, and if he now lives in a mansion that has 17 bathrooms, a huge theatre where he can examine in every detail whatever Lewis is capable of throwing at him, he says he still has no thoughts that this, the culmination of his career, will be his last.

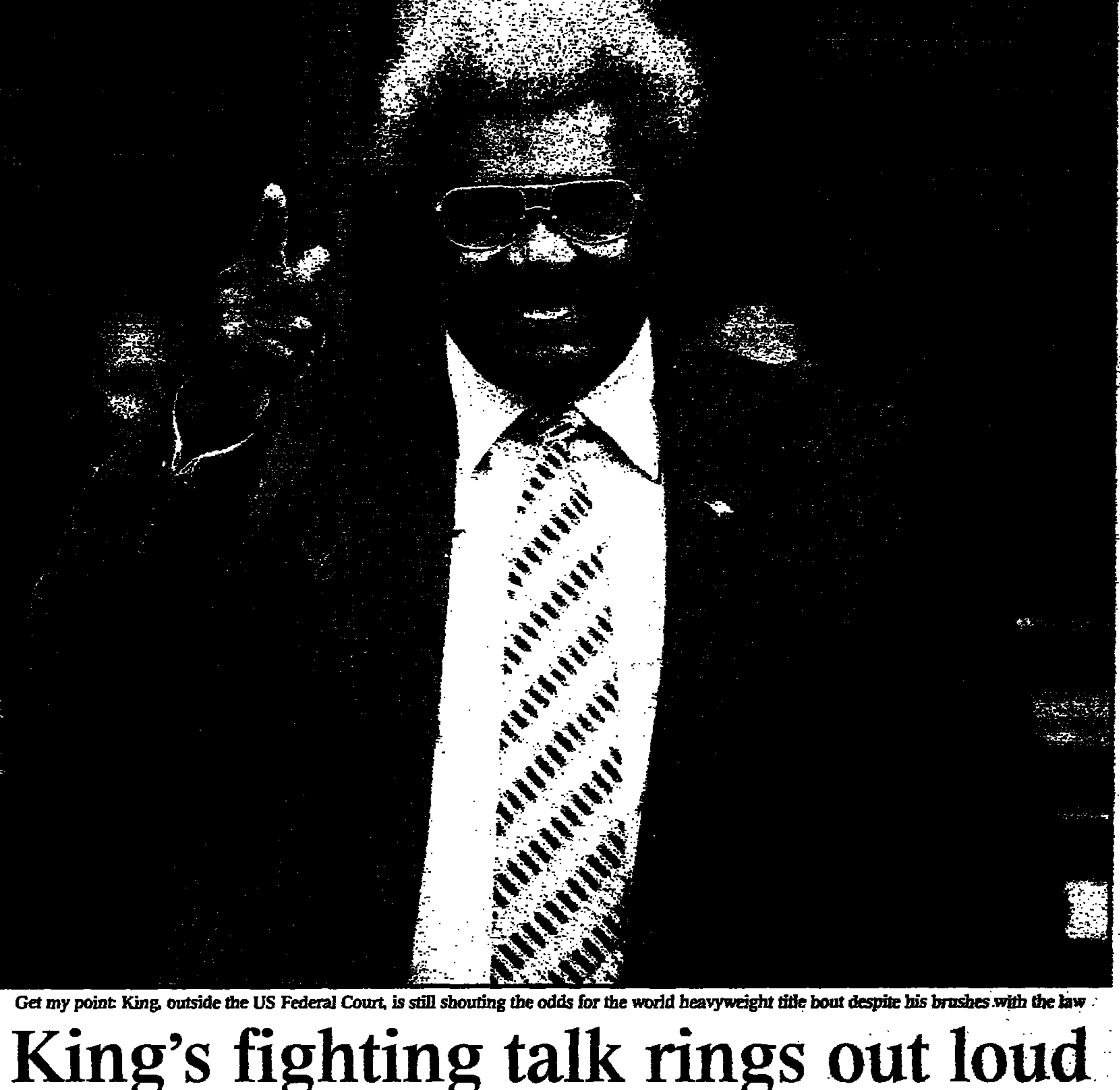
"Once you lose the desire to obtain your goals, it is time to get out," he has been saying throughout the week. "That is when you get hurt and you pay the price, that is what you call slipping." But he is not at that point, he believes. He is intent on unifying the heavyweight division, and then proving at least twice more why he has ended the nonsense of the world heavyweight champion being "a plural thing".

Across New York, at the United Nations, Kofi Annan, its General Secretary, has just presented Muhammad Ali with the Messenger of Peace Award. That is how old pugilists, or at any rate the greatest of them, is rated in this city. And as Lewis, outwardly relaxed himself, prepares in another place, another sweaty gymnasium, it is clear that the experts do not know exactly how to read this one.

It is as though everything is being viewed through steamed-up windows, knowing something is going on inside there, but not being clear exactly what. For example, when two men, seemingly equal in desire, each claiming that there has been no avoidance of one another, finally step inside those ropes, who can tell how the moment of history will affect them?

Lewis, especially, has never been at this moment. He has surely never been battered as hard as, unless it finishes very early, is coming his way. And he has never stepped into the Garden with such a weight of history beckoning. Again, those who know his mind believe he will rise to it, but they cannot know and he cannot know. As we leave the gym of Holyfield, the symbol of a bag, redundant yet reddened by the pounding of gloves, suggests that in time this will be forgotten. For one gladiator that will not be the truth.

LINKS
WEBSITES: http://www.tvko.com
TELEVISION: Sky Box Office 3, (Saturday, 10pm)



Get my point: King, outside the US Federal Court, is still shouting the odds for the world heavyweight title bout despite his brushes with the law

King's fighting talk rings out loud

Lynne Truss *is tempted to turn down the volume as the promoter holds court at Madison Square Garden*

They may not know it in Kosovo, but according to Don King, both the Serbs and the ethnic Albanians have agreed a ceasefire for Saturday night. The Holyfield-Lewis bout is *that* important. "Do you know what? They are calling a moratorium in Kosovo and Bosnia!" he bellows at alarmingly close quarters in Madison Square Garden's small auditorium — empty save for an unused boxing ring, a few desks and phones and a film crew waiting for an interview.

"How's that again?" one is tempted to josh. "You couldn't speak up, could you?" "I SAID TO THEM," he continues, "I said to them, they got to call a moratorium and watch the King's Crowning Glory. Nato couldn't do it, but Don King can do it.

"I got Bosnia! Then, if they die, they can die happy because they saw the fight of the millennium, and, if they survive, they'll have something to tell their kids!"

Since King looks like someone freshly emerged from a wind tunnel, I suppose it's fair enough that the only way to measure his personal impact is by reference to the Beaufort scale. An enormous, portly, grizzled African-American, flashing an oblong of diamonds on his finger the size of a mouse mat, he speaks at a volume that causes small buildings to fall over and helicopter pilots to wrestle, panicking, with the controls.

If you are standing two feet in front of him, all your hair streaks out backwards, so that you end up looking precisely like him. I was wondering when the hyperbole for the unification contest would start, and now it certainly has.

"Remember CYRANO DE BERGERAC?" he demands, extravagantly. "Crossed enemy lines just to mail a letter to ROXANE." I nod, confused, wondering what Cyrano de Bergerac has to do with Holyfield or Lewis, or the war in the former Yugoslavia. The answer (intriguingly) is absolutely nothing. Or possibly it has something to do with Lord Acton, who said that absolute power corrupts absolutely, or Churchill saying he would "fight on the beaches", or Kipling commending "if you can keep your head". It's all the same to Don King's snake-oil rhetoric, which is self-consciously surreal and hilarious.

"We had the Boston Tea Party in 1776, now we've got the FIGHT OF THE MILLENNIUM in 1999." And you can't argue with the historical grasp. One's only quibble with all this erudition is that for someone who claims to have spent such a lot of productive time in prison libraries, Don King is a relative stranger to the concept of keeping your voice down.

I am duly astonished by King. Almighty nerve is a quality tragically underrated outside of boxing, I suddenly realise. Hey, if you've got a decent word like "hyperbole" in the language, shouldn't someone by rights embody it? To be honest, it has been a slight disappointment so far to discover that our two heavyweight champions are nice guys who believe in the eloquence of dignified silence. I mean, where's the fun in that? Obnoxious overstatement is what's required of boxers, surely? "How will you beat Lewis?" Garry Richardson, of the BBC, asked Evander Holyfield in a little film on *Grandstand* last week. "Grandiosely," Holyfield confided, with relish. It was a great moment, but it had been tremendous hard work getting it out.

'Obnoxious overstatement is what's required of boxers, surely'

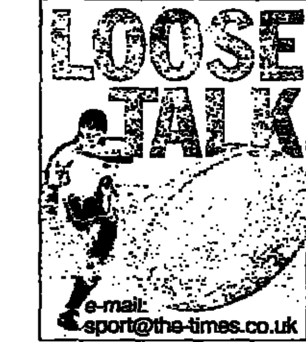
King won't speculate on how many people are paying to watch the bout. He said you shouldn't "count your marbles" — an interesting image that suggests he might have lost some. But he does local radio interviews end-to-end down the telephone, assuring the people of Tampa, for example, that black-market tickets are selling in Manhattan for $7,500 (about £4,700), and that if "they can't be on the scene, WATCH IT ON THE SCREEN!" It's not subtle. "But what exactly are you trying to get me to do, Don?" is something no one ever has to say. Not even in Red China, apparently, where he claims he's sold the contest; not even in "all those Iron Curtain places", such as Russia; and certainly not in Tampa, where radio listeners are at present swerving off the road.

What a marvellous start in life that his name was King, I can't help thinking. Setting off down the same path with a name like Warren — dark tunnels, do I go right or left? Oh God, rabbit droppings everywhere, is tragic bad luck.

Oddly, King seems to think he doesn't get enough credit for arranging this bout when he alone went out single-handed and slaughtered that wild boar and dragged it home and drew its fangs and tore its horns out. I can't think where he got that idea. This event is four times bigger than any event in the history of the Garden, he tells everyone, humbly submitting and bearing witness. It was sold out three months ahead. And we thank Britain for the Marquess of Queensberry, who brought order out of chaos.

"Will you do a little piece for us now?" the telly producer asks, when King pauses briefly for breath. "I'll do a BIG piece for you now," King says. And having simply swivelled on the spot, he just starts yelling in another direction.

Look Sharp(e) for Iberian adventures



VERY few rugby players have a literary canon named after them. Richard Sharp, the former England fly half, capped 14 times between 1960-67, has that honour since his name has been borrowed for the successful Richard Sharpe novels of Bernard Cornwell, whose sixteenth book in the series has just been published. Cornwell could not come up with an appropriate name for his rifleman, who achieves feats of daring during the Peninsula War, so in desperation, took the name of one of his favourite rugby players, added an e, and never looked back. He even exacted a form of revenge on the South Africa centre, Mannetjies Roux, whose high tackle broke Sharp's cheekbone during the 1962 British Isles tour. Roux found his way into one of the novels as Colonel Leroux, Sharpe's sworn enemy, who meets a suitably grisly end.

Petal power

After years of trying, the Rugby Football Union has managed to register the Red Rose as a trademark, one which new Labour has hijacked for its own cause. Only one trouble. The original design had 15 petals to signify a rugby team, the new design has only 11. Surely some mistake?

Tackle count

It features a line-up of buxom ladies, but it's a change from the usual glamour calendar and quite what *Playboy* boss Hugh Hefner would make of it is hard to say. Members of Newbury women's rugby club have posed for a millennium calendar to raise money for charity. A flick through reveals 12 of the side in various nude and semi-naked shots, some with only strategically placed rugby balls or tackle bags to hide their modesty. Bryony Clow, the captain and No 8, who is *Miss December*, said: "I could not believe how keen the girls were when it was suggested and I was quite shocked how far some of them would go." It's on sale now, so see for yourself.

Defence review

The Ministry of Defence has begun a review of the roles played by its professional sports stars, who include high profile names from the world of rugby such as Tim Rodber and Spencer Brown. In these cost-conscious days the Government is wondering whether it receives value for money from personnel who, in effect, are paid twice. While aware of the positive publicity the stars generate, our man on the ramparts in Whitehall says: "In recent years we have recognised the increasing amount of time and money involved in sport. Rugby union is the best illustration, so we are looking at current policy to make sure it is fair both to servicemen and taxpayer."

Site inspection

Spotted in the committee room for the recent Calcutta Cup match was Leo Williams, chairman of Rugby World Cup Ltd, who had been in Cardiff to check on the progress of the Millennium Stadium. When someone asked why he was at Twickenham one wag interjected: "He wants to see what a fully built stadium looks like." Ouch!

Punch line

Boxing aficionados may remember heavyweight John Westgarth, 39, who outpointed Steffan Tangstad, of Norway, in a 1986 European title challenge. He later switched careers and now provides Llandovery's pack with added clout in the Welsh League first division. He has become something of a folk hero in the mid-Wales town to which he commutes 200 miles, thrice-weekly, from his Wrexham home for training. Now the 6ft 5in lock has thrown his considerable weight behind a campaign to raise funds to enable Lizzie Hodges, a Wrexham toddler, to be sent to America for a spinal operation. He is arranging for Llandovery to pay Wrexham in a charity match later in the season.

Wing wonder

The Scottish Rugby Union has come up with an entertaining wheeze to raise funds for Comic Relief's Red Nose Day. On Friday, youngsters will be able to go along to Murrayfield where, for just £1, they will be allowed to score a try on the famous pitch. More entertaining still is the identity of the player who will launch the event. He is Roger Baird, a wing who failed to score a single try in 27 appearances for Scotland between 1981 and 1988.

Feet first

Hard to believe, but a photograph of Richard Cockerill on the front cover in the official RFU magazine, *Rugby 99*, has inspired a young Ghanaian to write to Twickenham for a pair of boots. Frederick Djabaku, 18, of the Shooting Stars club, has written to Dear Mr Peter (Trunkfield, the RFU president) explaining his predicament. He bought a "football boot for training" which "got spoiled" and his parents can't afford to replace it (sic). He wondered if Mr Peter could help, ending with this message: "May God bless your team to win all matches. PS: The size of the boot I wear is 12½ or 11." To be on the safe side, the RFU is sending two pairs and a signed England shirt.

MARK SOUSTER

Howley calls for WRU to mend fences with clubs

RUGBY UNION

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

ROBERT HOWLEY, who captained Wales to their heart-warming victory over France on Saturday, yesterday called upon the Welsh Rugby Union and the two breakaway clubs, Cardiff and Swansea, to settle their differences. "We need unity in the Welsh game and I hope we saw the start of that in Paris," Howley said. "It's time to bury the hatchet."

The union's general committee meets tomorrow to discuss the actions of Cardiff, Howley's club, and Swansea this season, with the possibility of expulsion hanging over them both. "This has dragged on for the last 18 months," Howley said. "Players and public have had a gutful. This is the time to sort it out prior to the tour to Argentina and the World Cup. It will be detrimental to Wales's chances in the future if two clubs so steeped in history are suspended."

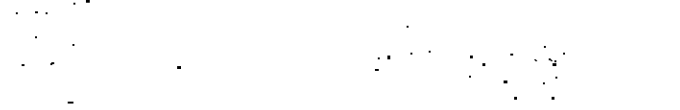
Howley, speaking at the launch of the Shell UK National Schools Sevens in London, also suggested that the Six Nations Championship, to be contested for the first time next year, should be played in a block, without domestic rugby intervening, so that the players could focus on performing at their best in the international arena. Wales's next game, after their breathless 34-33 win in Paris, will be the non-championship match against Italy in Treviso on March 20.

"The carrot for players then will be the chance to play against England, which everyone wants to do," Howley said. "I hope England will be going for a grand slam at Wembley on April 11, because that will leave us with some say in the destiny of this year's championship. People have praised the game we played last weekend but I think England, with players like Jeremy Guscott and Jonny Wilkinson, can play an attacking game."

Howley: plea for unity

Howley will be one of a clutch of internationals attending the National Sevens, which will be celebrating its diamond jubilee at Roehampton from March 22 to 26. Around 6,500 players will take part in 882 matches and the 486 competing teams will include 24 girls' teams. The competition will be watched by seven survivors of the first final, played in 1939, between St George's, Harpenden and Clifton College.

☐ Leicester are contemplating an appeal against the decision of a Rugby Football Union disciplinary panel to extend by five weeks the suspension of Austin Healey, their scrum half. Healey was found to have been reckless in stamping on Kevin Putt, the London Irish scrum half, but has already served a three-week ban imposed by Leicester; if an appeal is made, it could leave Healey available to play against Northampton on Saturday.



CRICKET

Road back looks hazardous for West Indies

FROM PAT GIBSON IN PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD

THE shockwaves were still reverberating around the Caribbean yesterday as the West Indies tried to come to terms with the worst disaster in their cricket history. They are used to earthquakes in these parts, but the collapse to 51 all out and defeat by 312 runs in the first Test against Australia was a tremor on an unprecedented scale.

All they can do now is pick up the pieces. They will recall Shivnarine Chanderpaul, their most consistent batsman who has now recovered from a shoulder injury, for the second Test starting in Jamaica on Saturday and hope to have Carl Hooper back for the third Test in Barbados.

These are only short term measures, however. The team that ruled the cricket world for 20 years will never recapture past glories unless and until the widely scattered powers that be get together to introduce a proper infrastructure.

"We should have seen this coming," Clive Lloyd, his moustache drooping as if in response to the calamity, said. "We cannot just keep selecting x and selecting y. All you are doing is digging a hole to fill a hole. What our cricket needs above all is a development programme so that all the different islands can sing from the same song sheet."

They are not singing at all these days. When Lloyd faced up to the last great crisis in 1976, when the West Indies were beaten 5-1 in Australia, he had a wealth of talent at his disposal. There were batsmen, like Gordon Greenidge, Desmond Haynes, Lawrence Rowe, Alvin Kallicharran, Viv Richards and Lloyd himself. Batting wicketkeepers in Deryck Murray and Jeff Dujon, and the all-rounders, Bernard Julien and Keith Boyce. Among the bowlers there were Andy Roberts and Michael Holding, Joel Garner, Lance Gibbs, and soon afterwards, Malcolm Marshall, Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose.

Brian Lara, who has been given two Tests to prove that he is the man to lead the West Indies out of their present slump, does not have anybody as good. Walsh and Ambrose remain but they are becoming stumbling blocks to promising younger fast bowlers. Of promising young batsmen, there is little sign.

The reasons for the decline are well documented. West Indies cricket was complacent, seemingly oblivious to the lure of American sports, especially basketball which seems to be on television all day, to their young athletes, confident that the natural talent would keep coming through.

Now the well has dried up and they have no alternative but to start all over again, identify the best young players and give them time to develop. They may lose a few more Tests but they are losing anyway, ten of their past 14, including the last six in a row.

As Lloyd, now the team manager, said: "Australia had a slump when people were calling for Allan Border to resign but they put their house in order. South Africa were preparing for their return to Test cricket for years. They had coaches, training camps and a lot more people involved than we have.

"We need to get our fellows much more rounded. They are playing for their country before they know what the flag and the badge mean. We should be instilling that in our youngsters from the ages of 13 and 14 and teaching them about the great fellows who have gone before."

Significantly, he added: "We don't have a lot of players in county cricket where you can develop the discipline, the professional attitude and the competitive spirit that you need. The South Africans are still sending their batsmen to England and so are the Australians because they realise the value of playing that sort of cricket."

For the moment, however, the West Indies must look to Australia for a glimmer of hope. There Hooper was saying that he hoped to return for the Barbados Test but it all depended on medical reports on his month-old son who is being treated in Adelaide for an undisclosed medical condition.

"If the result is negative, as I hope to God it will be, then I'll head back," he said. "Sitting and watching the Test on television, I was sort of torn in two because I'd like to think I could make a difference, but when you've got a sick son . . . well, I'm sure the board understands the situation."

Elsewhere in Australia, Mark Taylor, the former captain of his country, was taking on a promotional role for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney and talking about the size of the task facing the West Indies against the side he has handed over to Steve Waugh.

"It's harsh to say that they are the worst ever West Indies team because they are playing a very good Australia side," he said. "There is even talk of leaving Shane Warne out of a Test match and that's just unheard of. No other country in the world could afford to make that sort of decision but that's how strong Australian cricket is at the moment."

Fall from grace

WEST INDIES were undefeated in 27 series (excluding one-off Tests against South Africa and Sri Lanka) between June 1980 and February 1995, winning 19 and drawing eight (Bill Frindall writes).

Such was their resilience that they won or halved a series after being a match down nine times. Their match record for this period showed 59 wins (including two 5-0 successes against England), 41 draws, and just 15 defeats.

Excluding Monday's result, West Indies have lost half of their eight series since February 1995, winning three and sharing one. They have won 11 of the 38 Tests played during this period, losing 16 times, and drawing 11. Those 16 defeats include four by an innings, two by 10 wickets and five by over 100 runs.

This latest loss to Australia, following a 5-0 beating in South Africa, was West Indies' sixth defeat in succession, a sequence unparalleled in their history, and only two off the world record. Australia's win by 312 runs was their most emphatic by a runs margin in 35 Tests in the Caribbean.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



Flintoff, who learnt to control his impetuosity on the England A tour, amassed an aggregate of 542 first-class runs

Vaughan and Swann to fore

FROM THRASY PETROPOULOS IN CAPE TOWN

PERSONAL development, not team success, has always been the measure of achievement for A cricket tours. In that regard this winter's excursion to Zimbabwe and South Africa was no different. Individuals have furthered their claims for full international recognition, just as others have faded somewhat when put under the spotlight.

This time, however, some players have emerged with reputations enhanced because of a run of success which saw England A remain undefeated to the end of an eight-week tour, including two admirable victories over first-class opposition in South Africa.

Once again, while England's senior side flattered to deceive on foreign soil, in Australia, the development team was wrapping up an international series victory. It has now been five years and 29 matches since an England A side lost a first-class match of any description, to Natal on the 1993-94 tour to South Africa. While Alec Stewart lost all five tosses in the Ashes series, Michael Vaughan's policy of calling "tails" failed him only once in ten matches.

Good fortune aside, Vaughan's first serious stab at captaincy was impressive, particularly his handling of the Zimbabwe leg, where re-establishing the credibility of English cricket, both on and off the field, was of primary importance.

This was by some distance the most successful of Vaughan's three A tours. At 24 he cuts a mature and straightforward figure. Decisive, if undemonstrative as a captain, he is sensitive to the individual needs of players and conscious of the necessity for communication. He showed himself both able to play long, dour innings to save matches and aggressive, fluent affairs to set up declarations.

For the second successive A tour, the two leading wicket-takers in first-class matches were spinners. Dean Cosker, who in Kenya and Sri Lanka was second to Ashley Giles, this year finished with 22 wickets to Graeme Swann's 21.

It was Swann, however, who captured the imagination. An ability to spin the ball on almost any surface makes him a rare breed: an off spinner who on his day becomes a strike bowler. England A would probably not have achieved two of their three first-class victories had Swann not taken significant batches of wickets. Swann was disappointing with the bat, however.

After Andrew Flintoff was twice caught on the boundary in Kwekwe, he responded by pushing singles. The reward was not only 542 first-class runs at an average of 77.4, with five fifties and a century, but also, with his return to action as a bowler, a place in England's World Cup 15.

Chris Read appeared every inch an international wicket-keeper, even contributing with the bat. Of the batsmen, only Robert Key's tour was fruitless.

The pace bowling was another matter. Steve Harmison, with his pace and awkward bounce, stood out.

RESULTS

ZIMBABWE

JAN 16: v Country Districts (Harare), won by seven wickets.
JAN 18: v Country Districts (Harare), match abandoned.
JAN 20-24: v Mashonaland (Harare), match abandoned.
JAN 22: v Mashonaland (Harare), match abandoned.
JAN 23: v Mashonaland (Harare), won by 73 runs.
JAN 26-29: v President's XI (Kwekwe), match drawn.
FEB 2-6: v Zimbabwe A (Harare), match drawn.
FEB 9-13: v Zimbabwe A (Bulawayo), won by 193 runs.
FEB 16: v Zimbabwe A (Bulawayo), won by one wicket.
FEB 18: v Zimbabwe A (Harare), won by four wickets (D/L method).
FEB 20: v Zimbabwe A (Harare), won by two wickets (D/L method).

SOUTH AFRICA

FEB 25-28: v Gauteng (Wanderers), won by ten wickets.
MAR 4-8: v President's XI (Cape Town), won by 46 runs.

ENGLAND A TOUR AVERAGES

Batting

	M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Av'ge	100	50	Ct/St
A Flintoff	5	8	1	542	145	77.42	1	5	4/0
D L Maddy	4	7	1	329	135	54.83	1	2	6/0
M B Loye	4	7	0	336	133	48.00	1	2	4/0
M P Vaughan	5	8	0	336	131	42.00	1	2	0/0
M G N Windows	4	6	0	217	69	36.16	0	2	3/0
V S Solanki	4	6	1	169	65	33.80	0	1	7/0
C M W Read	5	8	2	154	47	25.66	0	0	11/1
G P Swann	5	9	1	176	48	22.00	0	0	8/0
D A Cosker	5	6	2	68	26*	17.00	0	0	1/0
S J Harmison	3	4	2	27	21*	13.50	0	0	1/0
S D Thomas	4	6	2	50	14*	12.50	0	0	0/0
R W T Key	3	5	0	52	25	10.40	0	0	4/0
J D Lewry	2	2	0	17	16	8.50	0	0	0/0
P J Franks	1	1	0	8	8	8.00	0	0	0/0
M M Betts	1	1	0	1	1	1.00	0	0	0/0

Bowling

	O	M	R	W	Av'ge	5W	10W	BB
S D Thomas	129.2	34	331	18	18.38	1	0	8-50
D A Cosker	203.1	51	504	22	22.90	1	0	5-57
G P Swann	201.5	43	538	21	25.61	1	0	5-77
J D Lewry	47	18	129	5	25.80	0	0	3-45
M M Betts	18.4	4	62	2	31.00	0	0	2-61
S J Harmison	113	35	272	7	38.85	0	0	4-79
A Flintoff	99.2	33	203	2	101.50	0	0	1-19
P J Franks	19	4	46	0	—	0	0	—
D L Maddy	9	2	19	0	—	0	0	—
V S Solanki	4	0	11	0	—	0	0	—
M P Vaughan	12	2	32	0	—	0	0	—
M G N Windows	2	0	7	0	—	0	0	—

* denotes not out

Champions choose bowler to stay the course

BY RICHARD HOBSON

LEICESTERSHIRE will defend the county championship with a new overseas player this season after deciding to sign Mike Kasprowicz rather than retaining Phil Simmons. While Simmons has been included in the initial West Indies World Cup squad, Kasprowicz was omitted by Australia and is therefore available for the whole campaign.

The county, title winners twice in the past three seasons, turned their attention towards a specialist fast bowler when Alan Mullally and Vince Wells were named in the England 15 for World Cup. Mullally is also expected to feature in the Test series against New Zealand in the second half of the summer.

Jack Birkenshaw, the Leicestershire manager, said: "We were delighted for Alan and Vince, but it had a big impact on our bowling resources so we needed a proven international standard bowler. Phil has been a popular and successful player and although he might not make the final cut, the new season is only five weeks away and we had to make a decision."

Kasprowicz, 27, has previous experience of championship cricket with Essex and made the last of his 15 Test appearances against England over the winter He has taken 38 test wickets at 35.36 and, after being left out of the present tour in the West Indies, returned a hat-trick for Queensland against Victoria last week.

Nottinghamshire have acted swiftly after the decision to release Paul Strang by appointing Vasbert Drakes, an all-rounder from Barbados based in South Africa, for 1999. Drakes, 29, who spent two seasons at Sussex, impressed Clive Rice, the Nottinghamshire cricket manager, when he played for Border over the winter.

Kent are now the only county yet to announce who will be their overseas player. Members were told at the annual meeting on Monday night that a final decision will not be made until the final World Cup squads have been announced.

IOC rules on cash-for-votes expulsion

By John Goodbody

ONE more member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) may be recommended for expulsion today, when a special panel ends its internal inquiry into the "cash-for-votes" bribery scandal.

Investigators will decide whether to bring to six the final total of members who face expulsion at the special IOC session in Lausanne, which begins on March 17.

Four have already resigned and five will plead their case against expulsion to fellow members next week as the scandal surrounding Salt Lake City being selected for the 2002 Winter Games reaches a climax.

Members have been accused of receiving gifts or services worth more than the allowed value of $150 (about £95) from Salt Lake before the American city won the vote in 1995 to stage the event.

Dick Pound, an IOC vice-president, yesterday declined to identify the member whose case is still being debated by the six-man panel. A total of 19 members have been investigated.

Pound said: "There is one case on which we have not come to a resolution." The five who have been temporarily suspended are Lamine Keita, of Mali, Agustin Arroyo, of Ecuador, Zein El Abdin Ahmed Abdel Gadir, of Sudan, Sergio Santander Fantini, of Chile, and Jean-Claude Ganga, of Congo.

Although the panel can recommend the expulsion of further members, this will have to be confirmed by the IOC executive board, which meets on Monday and Tuesday in Lausanne. A two-thirds majority of members is needed for expulsion when the session votes later in the week.

The IOC is also likely to appoint a special reform panel, including outside experts, to propose changes in its rules and structure in the wake of the biggest scandal in the movement's 106-year history.

CYCLING

Sprints help O'Grady take lead

STUART O'GRADY, of Australia, overhauled Andrei Tchmil, of Belgium, to take the overall lead in the Paris-Nice stage race yesterday (Jeremy Whittle writes).

O'Grady, the winner of the 1998 Prudential Tour of Britain, did enough in the intermediate sprints during the 204km route south through the Nivernais region to take the white race-leader's jersey with a lead of four seconds, only 48 hours after Boardman, his team-mate, had won the opening prologue stage in the Parisian suburbs.

Meanwhile, Richard Virenque, making his comeback to racing after the 1998 Tour doping scandal, tried his luck on the approach to the finish in Nevers with two attacks, but was soon reeled in as the field built up to a mass sprint, won by Jan Kirsipuu, the Estonian sprinter.

O'Grady, will be tested by the next four days of racing that take in a series of climbs in the Massif Central and culminate at the finish in Valberg, in the Provençal Alps.

SPORT IN BRIEF

■ SPORTS POLITICS: Tony Banks, the Minister for Sport, said yesterday that the Government was committed to the success of the cricket and rugby union World Cups, to be staged in Britain this year, in the hope that such tournaments would provide further ammunition for future bids for the world athletics championship in 2003 and the football World Cup in 2006. But Banks acknowledged that no public money would be spent on a bidding process unless the Government was convinced that such a process was "fair and accountable".

■ SAILING: The world's best professional yachtsmen are expected to take part in the 1999 World Match Race championships in Denmark in August, just before the America's Cup challenger races, the International Sailing Federation said on Tuesday. They include Peter Gilmour, of Australia, who tops the current world rankings and Chris Law, of Britain, the world No 3.

■ SKIING: High winds around the starting gates of the downhill races forced the cancellation of the first day's racing at the World Cup finals in Sierra Nevada, Spain, organisers announced yesterday. The men's and women's downhill races will now be held today, as originally scheduled. However, storms are expected for tomorrow when the men's and women's Super-G races are scheduled.

■ TENNIS: Ilie Nastase is among eight candidates for the presidency of the International Tennis Federation (ITF), the world governing body. The Romanian, one of the sport's biggest names in the 1970s, was among those nominated to succeed Brian Tobin as head of the ITF. The election will be held on July 9 at the ITF general assembly in Noordwijk, Holland.

■ NETBALL: Essex Met, the champions, condemned Birmingham to the second division next season with a victory that also kept alive their hopes of retaining the English Counties League title. East Essex will also be relegated after they lost to Middlesex, the league leaders. In the second division, Greater Manchester clinched their fourth successive promotion with a 47-24 triumph over Lancashire.

BOWLS

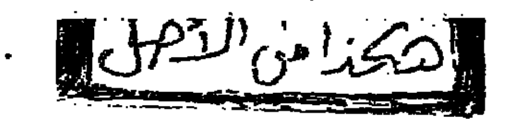
Foster heads Scottish domination

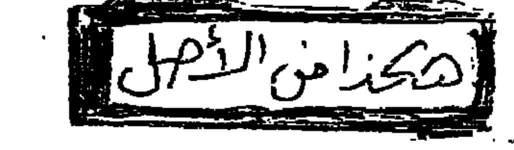
PAUL FOSTER was a 100-1 outsider when he won the world indoor singles title in 1998, but the Scot confirmed his growing stature when he defeated Jamie Mills, the English champion, 21-2, in the final of the British championship in Bournemouth yesterday (David Rhys Jones writes).

One possible successor to Foster is Darren Burnett, a 23-year-old policeman from Arbroath, who won the British triples and world junior singles titles last year. Yesterday, he played superbly to beat Ollie Ovett, from Brighton, 21-11 in the under-25 singles final.

Scots also won the pairs and triples, and failed only in the fours, in which a Welsh quartet — Jon Forey, Richard Morgan, Nigel Leigh and Jeff Webley — demolished a rink from Nottingham.

Jim Flannagan and Iain Sneddon, of Stirling, raced to a 23-8 win over Graham Dennis and Martyn Roberts, of Llanelli, while Peter Brown, and the Campbell brothers, Gavin and Graeme, from Prestwick, took the triples.


هكذا من الأصل



FOOTBALL

Rovers respond to kidology in bid to avoid drop

By Stephen Wood

RELATIVE newcomers to English football management they may be, but now is not the time for Brian Kidd or Walter Smith to cower behind their insecurities. Blackburn Rovers and Everton, managed by Kidd and Smith respectively, meet in the FA Carling Premiership tonight and the importance of the match is clear.

BOTTOM OF TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Coventry	28	8	6	14	30	39	30
Everton	27	6	10	11	20	29	28
Charlton	28	6	9	13	32	39	27
Blackburn	27	6	8	13	27	38	26
Southampton	28	7	5	16	27	53	26
Nottm F	27	3	8	16	22	54	17

If Blackburn were to win, thereby ending a sequence of five games without success, they would overhaul Everton and leave the Merseyside club even closer to the bottom three. If Everton were to claim only their third victory in 13 league outings, a comforting gap would appear between them and the possibility of a first season out of the top flight for 45 years.

It is doubtful, therefore, whether Ewood Park will be a place for goals or good football and it is to be hoped that the managers can shrug off the gloom surrounding their clubs.

In their last match there were signs that Kidd's positive message was being understood by his players. Trailing by two goals against West Ham United, Kidd made it clear at half-time that he would take ultimate responsibility for their fate this season. Their job, he insisted, was to forget about the bleak situation facing them and to play without anxiety. It was not enough to earn them a point at Upton Park, but the second-half display restored some pride and Kidd will be hoping for a similar response tonight.

Blackburn have since enjoyed a ten-day rest, although it has done little for their resources. Twelve players are still in the treatment room. Chris Sutton is still unavailable — this time suspended — and Kidd is still singing the same song. "I will not buy players for the sake of it," he said yesterday, "and there is no point moaning about injuries. I am confident the players available will do well."

There was some good news yesterday. Stéphane Henchoz, the defender, was released from international duty with Switzerland and, despite suffering from a long-term groin problem, should start tonight.

Smith's need to inspire his players is no less pressing. The manner of Everton's defeat to Newcastle United in the FA Cup on Sunday was a bitter pill to swallow after all that has happened to Smith this season, his first in the Premiership after leaving Rangers.

Everton's fixture list could hardly be tougher, with Arsenal, Manchester United and Liverpool to come after tonight. Moreover, Smith is having to put his faith in youngsters and there is no telling how they will react to such a task.

"It is an incredibly difficult spell," Smith said, "but the simple response is to take something from each game. Losing matches obviously has a detrimental effect on morale and we know we must be as positive as possible." Last season, Everton picked up 11 points from their last 11 games and avoided relegation on goal difference. This time, a similar return might not be enough.

Olivier Dacourt, the influential midfield player, is suspended tonight, but Michael Ball and Richard Dunne are available after completing their own bans.

Derby County and Aston Villa, who meet at Pride Park, will be hoping to improve their chances of qualification for the Uefa Cup. Villa have seemingly dropped out of the championship race after five matches without a win while Derby, with three victories in their past six matches, are relatively resurgent.

David Batty is hoping to make his first start for Leeds United in more than three months when Tottenham Hotspur visit Elland Road after recovering from a serious rib injury. Richard Gough, the former Scotland defender, could make his debut for Nottingham Forest against Newcastle after his free transfer to the City Ground.

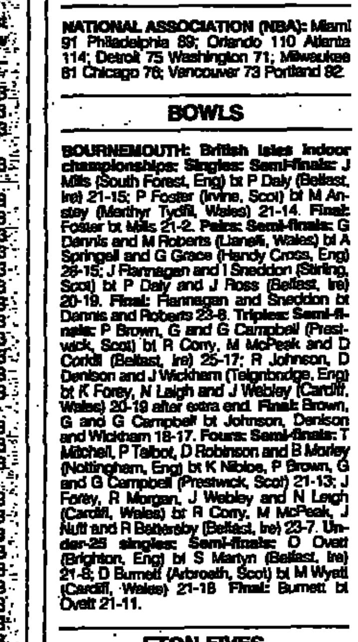
Harkness close to Benfica move

By Stephen Wood

STEVE HARKNESS, the Liverpool defender, is expected to leave Anfield and join Benfica, although the deal is dependent upon the Portuguese club's ability to meet the payments for the £750,000 transfer.

Liverpool's anxiety is caused by problems connected with two other deals involving Benfica and English clubs. Last year, Benfica were late in paying Manchester United and Sheffield United for the services of Karel Poborsky and Brian Deane respectively.

Benfica are managed by Graeme Souness, the former Liverpool manager who worked with Harkness when he was at Anfield between 1991-94. If the deal is concluded, Harkness will join Dean Saunders, Mark Pembridge and Michael Thomas at Benfica.



Harkness: set for Benfica

Aston Villa are confident of adding two new players to their squad. Yesterday they appeared close to signing Mark Delaney from Cardiff City, the Nationwide League third division club. The fee for Delaney could be £500,000, which would be a record for Cardiff.

Delaney, 22, a right-sided defender, was playing for Carmarthen Town in the League of Wales last year. His performances for Cardiff this season have been good enough to earn interest from Chelsea and Celtic, and he has had a call-up for the Wales B squad.

Villa could also become the first FA Carling Premiership club to sign a player from India. They have given a trial to Bhaichung Bhutia, a 21-year-old striker, with a view to making the move permanent. The East Bengal player, who has scored 21 goals in 31 international appearances for India, became the country's youngest professional at the age of 16.

Derby County today hope to complete the signing of Vassily Borbokis from Sheffield United, of the first division. Borbokis has been on the transfer list at Bramall Lane since he flew home to Greece without the permission of Steve Bruce, the United manager. The fee has not been disclosed, but Jonathan Hunt and Robert Kozluk will leave Pride Park to join United as part of the deal.

HOCKEY: HOLDERS RETAIN TROPHY AFTER LATE GOAL SECURES DRAW



TOM HEVEZI

Andrews, the Oxford goalkeeper, blocks a shot from Laird, of Cambridge, during the drawn University match yesterday

Oxford indebted to Darbon

Oxford University 2
Cambridge University 2

By Sydney Friskin

OXFORD retained the Deloitte & Touche trophy yesterday when they forced a draw with Cambridge after a pulsating finish to the 99th University match. Barely two minutes were left on the clock when Darbon scored from Oxford's tenth second-half short corner. The final minutes saw Cambridge fighting desperately for survival in a match that they had dominated for most of the first half.

Oxford's inability to link as a team in the first half handed Cambridge the initiative and their early pressure yielded three short corners in six minutes. From the third of these, Cambridge almost scored when a shot rebounded off the post. Their persistence paid off, however, when in the sixteenth minute, they were awarded a fourth short corner and Laird deflected a shot by McClive into the net.

Six minutes later Cambridge went two goals ahead. A free hit by Cotton was snapped up by the unmarked Gruslin who scored with ease.

Oxford had to wait until the 27th minute for their first short corner. It came to nothing, but they took command at the start of the second half and the corners started to flow.

The Cambridge defence held firm until the 52nd minute when Matthews broke through and passed to Johnson, who scored from close range. Oxford went in hot pursuit of an equaliser but the Cambridge defence refused to buckle under increasing pressure.

Eventually Oxford broke through and Darbon's goal drew them level, but despite its thrills, the match lacked the quality of former years.

Earlier in the day Cambridge Old Blues defeated Oxford 1-0 and in the schools game Framlingham beat Stowe 1-0.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY: C Andrews (Birkenhead and Brasenose), P Barker (Radley and Trinity), E Bevan (Gorseinon College and Pembroke), D Eadie (Cape Town University and St Edmund Hall, captain), N Pirthi (Waikato University and Merton), M Darbon (Bedford School and Worcester), P Atkinson (RGS Newcastle and Queen's), E Whitworth (Kingston GS and Brasenose), T Matthews (Hillsroad 6th Form and St Edmund Hall), M Mayer (The Perse and St Edmund Hall), T Johnson (Whitgift and Jesus). Substitutes: T Perry (Bryanston and St Edmund Hall), R Wilcock (Manchester GS and Brasenose).

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY: M Harris (Bedford School and Trinity), P Outram (Marlborough and Queens'), P Dodd (Simon Langton GS and Caius), R Hudson (Bishop's Stortford College and Jesus, captain), S Gray (Eastbourne College and Ridley Hall), G Weir (Bournemouth GS and Fitzwilliam), A Cotton (Bishop's Stortford College and Jesus), T Gruslin (European School of Brussels and Trinity), J Costelloe (Cookstown HS and Hughes Hall), A Laird (Magdalen CS, Oxford and Caius), I McClive (Guiseley School and St Catharine's). Substitutes: N Campbell (Christian Brothers College, Bulawayo and St John's), J Craven (Colonel Frank Seely School and Fitzwilliam)

Umpires: J Pilgrim and A Hoyes (both Southern Counties)

Varsity boxing faces knockout

By John Goodbody

THE staging of the annual University boxing match at the Guildhall, Cambridge tonight is under threat, with officials working hard to sort out a last-minute compromise over a dispute on the time of the weigh-in.

If the event is cancelled for the first time, in peace time, in its 102-year history, £10,000 will have to be reimbursed to the crowd of 800 and there are fears that the famous series will come to an end.

There is a special edge to the match this year because Oxford have won every year since 1985 — the longest winning run in any sport in history — but only by a margin of 5-4 on the past two occasions.

Geoff Gestetner, the Cambridge president and former Blue, said yesterday: "I am extremely worried about the situation. If there is no compromise, then that is it as far as Varsity boxing is concerned.

"Our club could not survive without the money from the match this year and, in any case, I cannot see Cambridge going to Oxford next year after what has happened."

The row has broken out because of the time of the weigh-in for the boxers in the nine weight categories. It has been traditional that the weigh-in for the match is always at midday for the evening fixture.

This earlier time has allowed boxers from both universities to eat at least one large meal and also rehydrate themselves properly before they fight, which is advisable for their health.

Last year, Cambridge requested a later start but were informed in an e-mail from Owen Darbishire, the Oxford senior treasurer and former Blue, that since the event is recognised by the Amateur Boxing Association (ABA) open tournament, "there is no requirement for the weigh-in to be in the evening but it can be determined by the promoting club — obviously this year that being Oxford".

Last month, Cambridge insisted that it wanted a 6pm weigh-in, which it is believed would handicap Oxford, some of whose fighters might have trouble making the weight.

Oxford objected, pointing to medical opinion from the chairman of the ABA medical commission that there should be an earlier weigh-in.

Cambridge then offered a 5pm weigh-in, which is the minimum it can do under ABA rules, but Oxford have continued to object.

RUGBY LEAGUE

World Cup to remain in hands of Britain

By Christopher Irvine

SOUTH AFRICA yesterday withdrew their surprise counterbid to host the 16-team millennium World Cup, which the Rugby League International Federation (RLIF) re-confirmed would be held in Britain in October next year.

Much of the first day of the two-day RLIF meeting in Sydney was taken up by the 2000 World Cup and the voluntary decision by the South African Rugby League to drop its interest in staging the event, which was orginally awarded to Britain last August.

"It was agreed that the prospect of a World Cup in Britain offered the potential for greater financial distributions to each of the participating nations, as well as a greater contribution to the international development of the game," Neil Tunnicliffe, the chief executive of the Rugby Football League, said.

The earlier announcement by South Africa that it was bidding for the event had been greeted with incredulity by most other rugby league countries, after the embarrassing episode of the World Nines tournament. That was awarded to Johannesburg, and then cancelled a few weeks before it was due to have been held last month.

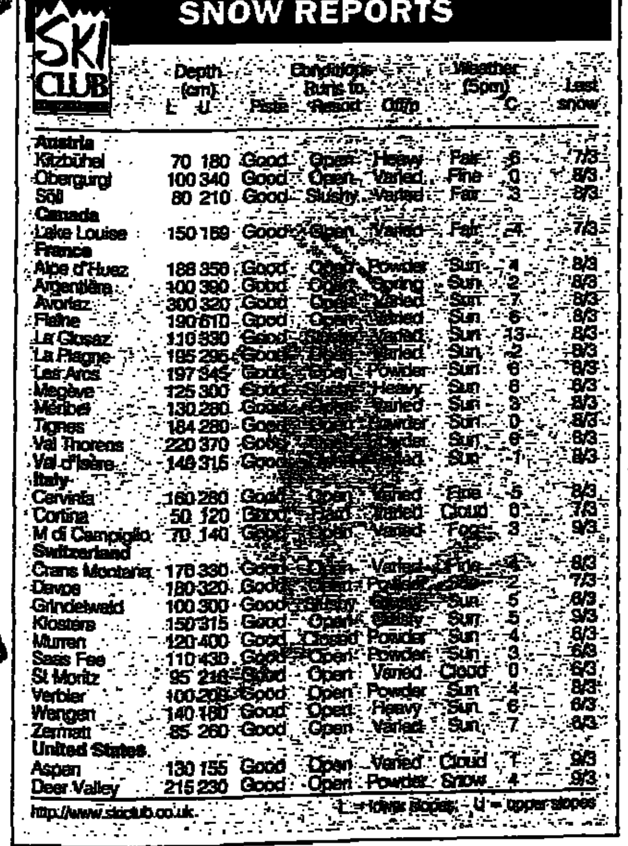
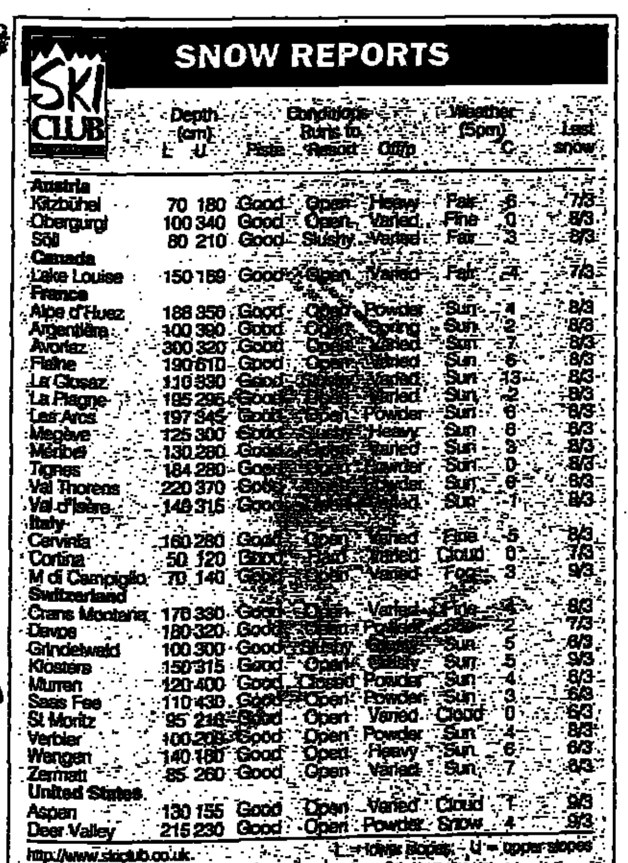
South Africa is due to host a match between Great Britain and New Zealand, at Ellis Park in November, after the proposed tri-nations series in Australia and New Zealand. After the controversy over the Nines, that fixture, too, must be in doubt.

The tri-nations itself still has to be confirmed, after New Zealand expressed concerns about its financial viability, concerns which Tunnicliffe hopes to resolve on the second day of the Sydney meeting.

New Zealand would rather cut out Britain and play a three-international series with Australia. New Zealand's bluff could even be called by a suggestion that Britain should play Australia instead.

It was decided that the problem of a sixteenth participant in the World Cup next year would be overcome by a qualifying tournament. Italy, Lebanon and Morocco will meet in one pool and the United States, Canada and Japan in another. The winners will play off in an elimination final.

Russia was given affiliate membership of the RLIF, which granted conditional affiliate membership to Morocco and Japan, pending submission of further information. The United States and Canada were made honorary members.

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Runs to Resort	Off-p	Weather (5pm)	C	Last snow
Austria								
Kitzbühel	70	180	Good	Open	Heavy	Fair	6	7/3
Obergurgl	100	340	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	0	8/3
Söll	80	210	Good	Slushy	Varied	Fair	3	8/3
Canada								
Lake Louise	150	169	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	-4	7/3
France								
Alpe d'Huez	188	350	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	4	8/3
Argentière	100	390	Good	Open	Spring	Sun	2	8/3
Avoriaz	300	320	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	7	8/3
Flaine	190	610	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	6	8/3
La Clusaz	110	330	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	13	8/3
La Plagne	195	295	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	2	8/3
Les Arcs	197	345	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	6	8/3
Megève	125	300	Good	Slushy	Heavy	Sun	6	8/3
Méribel	130	280	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	3	8/3
Tignes	184	280	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	0	8/3
Val Thorens	220	370	Good	[illegible]	Powder	Sun	6	8/3
Val d'Isère	148	315	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	1	8/3
Italy								
Cervinia	160	280	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	5	8/3
Cortina	50	120	Good	Hard	Varied	Cloud	0	7/3
M di Campiglio	70	140	Good	Open	Varied	Fog	3	9/3
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	170	330	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	4	8/3
Davos	180	320	Good	Open	Powder	[illegible]	2	7/3
Grindelwald	100	300	Good	Slushy	[illegible]	Sun	5	6/3
Klosters	150	315	Good	Open	[illegible]	Sun	5	9/3
Murren	120	400	Good	Closed	Powder	Sun	4	6/3
Saas Fee	110	430	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	3	6/3
St Moritz	95	218	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	0	6/3
Verbier	100	208	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	4	8/3
Wengen	140	180	Good	Open	Heavy	Sun	6	6/3
Zermatt	85	260	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	7	8/3
United States								
Aspen	130	155	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	1	9/3
Deer Valley	215	230	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	4	9/3

http://www.skiclub.co.uk. L = lower slopes; U = upper slopes

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Miami 91 Philadelphia 89; Orlando 110 Atlanta 114; Detroit 75 Washington 71; Milwaukee 81 Chicago 76; Vancouver 73 Portland 82.

BOWLS

BOURNEMOUTH: British Isles indoor championships: Singles: Semi-finals: J Mills (South Forest, Eng) bt P Daly (Belfast, Ire) 21-15; P Foster (Irvine, Scot) bt M Anstey (Merthyr Tydfil, Wales) 21-14. **Final:** Foster bt Mills 21-2. **Pairs: Semi-finals:** G Dennis and M Roberts (Llanelli, Wales) bt A Springell and G Grace (Handy Cross, Eng) 26-15; J Flannagan and I Sneddon (Stirling, Scot) bt P Daly and J Ross (Belfast, Ire) 20-19. **Final:** Flannagan and Sneddon bt Dennis and Roberts 23-8. **Triples: Semi-finals:** P Brown, G and G Campbell (Prestwick, Scot) bt R Corry, M McPeak and D Corkill (Belfast, Ire) 25-17; R Johnson, D Denison and J Wickham (Teignbridge, Eng) bt K Forey, N Leigh and J Webley (Cardiff, Wales) 20-19 after extra end. **Final:** Brown, G and G Campbell bt Johnson, Denison and Wickham 18-17. **Fours: Semi-finals:** T Mitchell, P Talbot, D Robinson and B Morley (Nottingham, Eng) bt K Nibloe, P Brown, G and G Campbell (Prestwick, Scot) 21-13; J Forey, R Morgan, J Webley and N Leigh (Cardiff, Wales) bt R Corry, M McPeak, J Nutt and R Battersby (Belfast, Ire) 23-7. **Under-25 singles: Semi-finals:** D Ovett (Brighton, Eng) bt S Martyn (Belfast, Ire) 21-8; D Burnett (Arbroath, Scot) bt M Wyatt (Cardiff, Wales) 21-18. **Final:** Burnett bt Ovett 21-11.

ETON FIVES

ETON: Alan Barber Cup: Old Salopians bt Old Cholmeleians 2-1 (E Taylor and M Lascelles bt E Wass and J Halstead 12-7, 12-8, 8-12, 12-6; M Hughes and I Hutchinson bt M Williams and J Pinner 15-13, 12-4, 9-12, 12-5; J Lewis and A Walters lost to C Davies and R Rumsam 14-15, 3-12, 13-15). **Eton Fives Association Trophy:** Old Salopians bt Cambridge University 2-1 (C Sturdy and G Gow bt N Shaw and A Taylor 12-6, 14-11, 12-6; A Walters and J Adie lost to R Bryan and J Grant-Peterkin 10-12, 5-12, 10-12; A Elliott and M Quinn bt P Thompson and J Birch 12-7, 12-7, 12-5)

FOOTBALL

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Postponed: Grimsby v QPR; Wolverhampton v Crewe. **Second division: Postponed:** Lincoln City v Wrexham; Notts County v Wycombe; York v Blackpool. **Third division: Postponed:** Halifax v Scunthorpe; Hartlepool v Leyton Orient; Mansfield v Exeter; Shrewsbury v Rotherham. **Nationwide Conference: Postponed:** Doncaster v Northwich.

Monday's late results

TENNENT'S SCOTTISH CUP: Quarter-final: Greenock Morton 0 Celtic 3.
AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD: Northern section: Semi-final: Rochdale 0 Wigan 2.
UEFA UNDER-18 CHAMPIONSHIP: Preliminary qualifying group: Spain 1 England 1 (in Cadiz).
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Worcester 0 Salisbury 0.
RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: St Albans 1 Heybridge Swifts 1.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Watford 1 Arsenal 1
UNIBOND LEAGUE CUP: Second-round replay: Hucknall 3 Emley 2.

HOCKEY

MEN'S VARSITY MATCH (at Milton Keynes): Oxford 2 Cambridge 2.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Carolina 4 Buffalo 1; Montreal 2 Florida 5; New York Rangers 3 Toronto 2 (OT); Ottawa 9 Tampa Bay 3.

REAL TENNIS

PHILADELPHIA: United States Open: Singles (Great Britain unless stated): **Second round:** J Snow bt W Simonds (US) 6-1, 6-0, 6-1; N Wood bt J Burke (US) 6-4, 6-3, 6-3; W Davies (Aus) bt M Noll (US) 6-1, 6-2, 6-2; M Gooding bt N Smith 6-3, 6-1, 6-3; F Filipelli (Aus) bt N Devine 2-6, 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-3; J Male bt M Eadie 6-2, 6-1, 6-2; R Gunn bt S Virgona (Aus) 6-4, 4-6, 6-1 ret; C Bray bt J Howell 6-0, 6-2, 6-1. **Quarter-finals:** Snow bt Wood 6-4, 6-5, 3-6, 6-2; Davies bt Gooding 4-6, 6-4, 6-5, 6-3; Male bt Filipelli 6-2, 6-4, 6-1; Bray bt Gunn 6-1, 6-2, 6-5. **Semi-finals:** Davies bt Snow 6-2, 5-6, 2-6, 6-5, 6-1; Male bt Bray 4-6, 5-6, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4. **Final:** Davies bt Male 5-6, 6-2, 6-0, 6-1

RUGBY LEAGUE

NORTHERN FORD PREMIERSHIP: Postponed: Hull KR v Oldham.

SAILING

CLIPPER ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE: Leg 3d (Yokohama to Shanghai; with miles to finish): 1, Ariel (A Thomson) 172; 2, Antiope (K Harris) 193; 3, Thermopylae (M Tod) 206; 4, Serica (R Dean) 210; 5, Mermerus (B Sollars) 223; 6, Taeping (N Fleming) 271; 7, Chrysolite (T Hedges) 318

SCHOOLS SPORT

BASKETBALL: Sligo: Girls four countries international tournament: Final: England 44 Ireland 40

LACROSSE: Milton Keynes: Girls national tournament: Farr Cup (seniors): **Semi-finals:** St Helen's, Northwood 3 Benenden 2; St Helen and St Katharine of Abingdon 2 St Leonard's-in-Fife 1. **Final:** St Helen's, Northwood 1 St Helen and St Katharine of Abingdon 2.

SNOOKER

SHANGHAI: China international tournament: First round: N Bond (Eng) bt J Swail (N Ire) 5-0; P Ebdon (Eng) beat Pang Wei Guo (China) 5-3; S Davis (Eng) bt Q Hann (Aus) 5-1; J Parrott (Eng) bt D Finbow (Eng) 5-4; S Hendry (Scot) bt A Davies (Wales) 5-2; M Stevens (Wales) bt A Robidoux (Can) 5-0; K Doherty (Ire) bt M Holt (Eng) 5-0; W Snaddon (Scot) bt J Wattana (Thai) 5-3; J Higgins (Scot) bt J Burnett (Scot) 5-4

TABLE TENNIS

GREAT YARMOUTH: English Open: Men: Qualifying round: S Campbell (Surrey) bt T Adedayo (Herts) 21-19, 21-13; S James (Yorks) bt N Charles (Middx) 14-21, 21-16, 21-18; R Abbotts (Sussex) bt P Beck (Kent) 21-9, 21-13; M James (Yorks) bt A Conteh (Leics) 21-14, 21-16; T Cutler (Middx) bt E Roole (Wilts) 21-9, 21-13; A Wuracola (Surrey) bt A Corbin (Herts) 21-9, 21-11; M Isherwood (Derby) bt J Walsh (Middx) 21-17, 21-15; C Beckley (Surrey) bt B King (Essex) 17-21, 21-19, 23-21; R King (Suffolk) bt A Brewer (Norfolk) 21-18, 21-11; S James bt Wuracola 21-17, 22-20; Isherwood bt A Fran (Staffs) 21-8, 21-11; Adedayo bt G Freeman (Wilts) 21-18, 21-12; M James bt R King 21-14, 17-21, 21-6; N Eckersley (Sussex) bt G King 21-12, 21-18; Roole bt Abbotts 21-12, 21-19; M Essomba (Surrey) bt J Dennison (Essex) 21-11, 21-15; Conteh bt Brewer 21-19, 21-14; Charles bt Corbin 21-15, 21-17; Cutler bt Beck (Kent) 21-14, 21-8; Campbell bt Freeman 21-16, 21-18; Roole bt Beckley 21-16, 21-15; Wuracola bt Charles 21-18, 16-21, 21-18; King bt Conteh 21-19, 24-26, 21-13; James bt Brewer 21-15, 22-20; Eckersley bt Beckley 21-10, 21-17; Cutler bt Abbotts 21-9, 21-12; James bt Corbin 21-13, 4-21, 22-20; M James bt S James 21-11, 21-12; Essomba bt Campbell 21-19, 19-21, 21-13; Cutler bt Eckersley 21-15, 16-21, 21-15; James bt Abbotts 21-6, 21-12; Isherwood bt Rodgers 21-11, 21-16

TENNIS

INDIAN WELLS, California: Champions Cup: First round: G Rusedski (GB) bt P Korda (Cz) 6-3, 6-4; M Safin (Russ) bt T Enqvist (Swe) 6-4, 6-4; T Johansson (Swe) bt J Stoltenberg (Aus) 6-2, 6-3; F Mantilla (Sp) bt A Di Pasquale (Fr) 6-4, 6-4; N Kiefer (Ger) bt M Puerta (Arg) 6-3, 6-2; H Arazi (Mor) bt T Haas (Ger) 5-5 ret; F Clavet (Sp) bt W Ferreira (SA) 6-3, 6-2; G Kuerten (Br) bt T Muster (Austria) 6-2, 6-4; S Schalken (Holl) bt J Bjorkman (Swe) 1-6, 7-6, 7-6; P Haarhuis (Holl) bt A Costa (Sp) 7-5, 6-1; J Siemerink (Holl) bt M Chang (US) 7-5, 6-3; M Philippoussis (Aus) bt B Ulihrach (Cz) 7-6, 7-6; C Pioline (Fr) bt M Zabaleta (Arg) 6-4, 4-6, 6-3; X Malisse (Bel) bt D Sanguinetti (It) 6-1, 3-6, 6-1. **WTA Evert Cup: Third round:** H Nagyova (Slovakia) bt M Seles (US) 6-2, 6-4; S Testud (Fr) bt N Tauziat (Fr) 7-6, 6-2; C Rubin (US) bt A Coetzer (SA) 6-4, 6-4; M Hingis (Switz) bt P Schnyder (Switz) 6-1, 6-3
ATP RANKINGS: 1, P Sampras (US) 3,449pts; 2, Y Kafelnikov (Russ) 3,382; 3, A Corretja (Sp) 3,250; 4, C Moya (Sp) 3,234; 5, P Rafter (Aus) 3,134; 6, M Rios (Chile) 2,880; 7, T Henman (GB) 2,764; 8, R Krajicek (Holl) 2,619; 9, A Agassi (US) 2,491; 10, G Rusedski (GB) 2,427

Beneath the glamour, feel the pain

SIMON BARNES

Midweek View

Crack, crack, first left fistie then right, so that our dear old droog, the red — red vino on tap and the same in all places, like it's all put out by the same big firm — started to pour and spot the nice clean carpet ..."

Words from Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*. This tale of horror was made into a film by Stanley Kubrick, who died at the weekend. It was Kubrick's achievement to make gang violence somehow cosy: somehow gloriously sexy, something to attract not the interest but the outright envy of the middle classes, who, as they watched the film, felt deprived at never having been deprived.

It was the ultimate cinematic achievement in the gentrification of violence: not the stylised violence of a Western, but the real violence of street and housing estate that takes place in an almost tangible future.

There cannot have been a single male student in Britain in 1971 who did not greet his companions with such catch phrases as: "What's it going to be then, eh?" and "Come and get one in the yarbles, if you have any yarbles, you eunuch jelly thou."

Violence was never so cuddly as in *A Clockwork Orange*. Which brings me to such matters as the recent retirement of Vinnie Jones and the world heavyweight boxing championship that takes place this weekend. These are celebrations of the gentrification of violence.

Jones is a man of genuine violence. He has the criminal record to prove it: also the disciplinary record in football. And he has become a kind of cuddly national icon: a pantomime demon, a loveable villain, whose misdeeds are those of a charming scamp.

And he has made money not in spite of his reputation for violence but because of it. The money that he has earned from various advertising promotions comes because he has made himself an icon of violence. His invitation to act in the film *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* came not only because of a good face, but because a producer knows a publicity angle when he sees one.

Violence hurts. But there is something in all sport — most especially in all televised sport — that plays violence down: that transforms violence into loveable scampery. In sport, violence is a charming peccadillo. If you can forgive it, if you condone it, you have claimed your place in the right sort of male clique.

You either believe me or you have never been to a world heavyweight boxing title fight. There we have a world of male solidarity in which criminal violence becomes one more tale of Runyonesque charm, larded with tough wisecracks. Tyson's committed suicide? That must make the Bruno fight evens.

How we laughed. Boxing makes violence acceptable. The big padded gloves minimise the appearance of such ugly stuff as blood, and at the same time maximise the fist's concussive effect on the brain. Which, of course, you don't see. Big, soft, cuddlesome boxing gloves give the right sort of cosmetic touch to violence. Boxing has created a world in which even Tyson becomes admirable, and in certain lights, even loveable, and Don King is a merry figure of fun.

Frank Bruno, whose career path from school bully to wife-beater involved a detour as a heavyweight boxer, was able to make himself a totem of loveableness: Bruno, like Little Alex in *A Clockwork Orange*, became one of the ultimate expressions of the prettification, the gentrification of violence.

The medium of television has a good deal to do with this phenomenon. The cinema screen exploited the terrible ambiguities of the subject matter in Kubrick's film: you were always aware, in relishing the violence, relishing the exoticism of Little Alex and his strange nadsat vocabulary, you were relishing the unspeakable. That was the brilliant trick at the heart of the film.

But television flattens the violence, and makes a boxing match look like an ill-choreographed saloon brawl in a bad Western. It is the same with Formula One: on television it looks like Scalextric. But stand a few inches away from real action, and you feel power beyond your imagining.

You can literally feel the earth shake when a racing car goes past. And if you watch a heavyweight land a punch with his full weight behind it — a million miles away from the slaps and cuffs of ball-game spats — you feel something profound; and profoundly horrible. This is not a film, this is real, potentially lethal violence. You feel that in what Little Alex calls your guttiwuts.

The gentrification of violence is something that Kubrick managed as a *coup de cinema*, a stroke of genius. Sport manages the same trick on a daily basis: but without the moral foundation of a Burgess text.

Televised sport gives us the falsity that violence doesn't really hurt: that violence is charming and that men of violence are loveable rogues.

Viddy well, my brothers, viddy well.

'Televised sport gives us the falsity that violence doesn't really hurt'



TOM HEVEZI

Goode and Archer return to the game's roots in the North Hall at Badminton House

Archer aims high for centenary

Badminton's advance to a modern business has helped its leading players, Richard Eaton argues

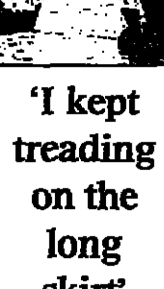
SIMON ARCHER and Joanne Goode are two of England's best hopes in a new era which, by the start of the next century, will have brought millions of pounds into badminton. They have also been discovering what it was like a century ago, when Lady Henrietta Somerset kept a shuttlecock in the air more than 2,000 times at her Gloucestershire country home, Badminton House.

The piece of time-travel has been prompted by the centenary celebrations of the All-England championships this week. The world-famous open tournament has helped to transform an aristocratic pastime into a professional sport played in more than 150 nations, and starts again today at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham.

It was in the 1850s that Badminton House lent its name to the game. Now Archer and Goode have taken their version of it back to the Duke of Beaufort's residence and tried to play it Henrietta's way. "I kept treading on the skirt," Goode, who wore fashionably tight-fitting shorts when she won three gold medals at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur last September, said.

Archer, who set the world speed-hitting record of 162mph recently, was more concerned this time not to split his blazer. However, he should be at full throttle again today when he continues his partnership with Goode. They reached the final of the world grand prix championships in Brunei last month and are among the seeds for a mixed doubles event in which they are trying to become the first home players for five years to win an All-England title. Sadly, their draw could not have been worse had they been ordered to compete in Victorian costume all week. Kim Dong-Moon and Ra Kyung-Moon, the brilliantly quick South Koreans who beat them in Brunei, are in their section and could bar their way at the quarter-final stage.





'I kept treading on the long skirt'

Asians may dominate the tournament a little less than in recent years, because Sun Jun, the title-holder from China, pulled out with a leg injury yesterday, making Peter Gade, the world No 1 from Denmark, a stronger contender. Two other Chinese players, Ge Fei and Gu Jun, the Olympic and world women's doubles champions, have also withdrawn.

Two other casualties were Darren Hall and Julia Mann, England's two singles champions, although a far better home hope in the singles is Kelly Morgan, of Wales, the winner of Commonwealth gold and European silver medals.

Another All-England champion from China, Ye Zhaoying, will be trying to become the first women's singles player to win three times in a row since Judy Hashman in 1964.

Hashman is a link to the amateur era of badminton which was graced by Sir George Thomas, who was also a chess grandmaster. In an age that now seems utterly remote, Kitty McKane had the time to win an All-England title at both badminton and tennis, and Hashman's father, Frank Devlin, won 17 All-England titles with an unusually loosely-jointed elbow, which helped to perfect the wrist snap needed for a full-length backhand clear.

Devlin is sometimes called the first modern player, although as late as the 1960s, when Hashman won the last of her 16 titles, she would still sometimes train in her garden. Archer and Goode follow a professional training regimen almost every day. Like others in the present England squad, they are benefiting from a transformation at the national centre in Milton Keynes, which will have had £6 million spent on it by the end of this year.

Facilities and coaching staff have improved enough to raise hopes that England may close the gap on the "big five" — China, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia and Denmark — during the next decade.

A marked progress in fitness and attitudes has occasionally required tough measures, and players are being disciplined for a lack of professionalism more than ever before; Peter Knowles, the former national champion, is trying to return to form after a two-month ban.

Three weeks ago, Archer made waves by ending his six-year partnership with Chris Hunt, with whom he holds the European men's doubles title. "There comes a moment when it's time to try something different," Archer said.

That difference is Nathan Robertson, a 21-year-old with rare racket skills, unpredictable hairstyles, and a temperament that has tended to land him in trouble. Hunt plays with the unrelated Julian Robertson, and the centenary All-England is the new partnership's first tournament.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 48

ACAROLOGIST

(c) Somebody who studies or treats mites. Akaris is the Greek and hence the Latin for a mite. "Almost all the members of the genus (Damaeus) have a globular abdomen, or else one which is discoidal, the latter being considered a separate genus by some acarologists."

FRAG

(c) To throw a fragmentation grenade at one's superior officer, especially one who is considered over-zealous in his desire for combat. An abbreviation of frag(mentation grenade). "Fragging is a macabre ritual of Vietnam in which American enlisted men attempt to murder their superiors. The word comes from the nickname for hand grenades, a weapon popular with enlisted men because the evidence is destroyed with the consummation of the crime."

CREPIS

(b) A plant of the large genus of herbs so called, belonging to the family Compositae and including a few cultivated species. Theophrastus's Greek name for a different plant. "Most species of crepis are weeds and all have flowers like small dandelions."

BORBORYGMIC

(c) Characterised by belly rumbles or borborygms. The Greek and thence the medical word. "The room was very quiet, except for the borborygmic old radiator."

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

1 ... Rxf2+! 2 Rxf2 Nf4+ 3 Rxf4 Qxd1 with a decisive material advantage.

TELEVISION CHOICE

Brits going Dutch

Modern Times: Amsterdamage
BBC2, 9pm

Crazy title, crazy film — at least judging by opening shots which suggest that drugs will waft you into an inexpressably blissful world of colour and sparkle. First we watch a turned-on "Patsi Taylor" whose female characteristics slightly outweigh the male. He/she lives in Amsterdam ("Honeypot of Europe") and writes bodice-ripping novels which don't sell. Her great chum is Dawn who has left an adulterous husband and a young son, Kris, back home. Dawn's crumpled face is in permanent smile mode and you can't help warming to her even if she has paid for trips to see Kris by drug-running. Countless Brits visit the Dutch capital for a fun (and legal) weekend — and stay. Patsi, Dawn and a now grown-up Kris are still there. But towards the end of the film, they seem in sombre mood, pondering what might have been.

Trouble at the Top: Not the Nice Girl
BBC2, 9.50pm

Petra Doring obviously never goes anywhere without a glittering belt buckle, numerous rings, at least three necklaces and bracelets, glitzy earrings and a chunky brooch. She is Cabouchon incarnate — the woman behind the costume jewellery firm which, until recently, was Britain's most successful direct-selling company. Then it went broke, leaving a trail of equally bejewelled staff weeping in its wake. "She used me then totally dropped me," wails one. "I'm still owed £10,000," wails another. None of this fazes Petra who simply picks herself up, dusts herself down and starts all over again — reselling her baubles under a different name.

Sex and the City
Channel 4, 10pm

If maiden aunts find themselves blushing when they watch this series I don't advise them to watch tonight's discussion among the New York thirty-something manhunters about one aspect of love-making which in polite circles is surely better left unspoken. Prudish? I checked with two thirty-somethings I know to see if it really does go on and they said: "Oh that — of course we've discussed it. But isn't this subject a bit passé when you're over 30?" Back to the series. Carrie is deeply in love with Big — until she spots him at a corner table with, gulp, another woman. This sparks the inevitable soul-searching about how far a courting couple should be expected to remain faithful.

Life, love and infidelity with the thirty-somethings in *Sex and the City* (C4, 10pm)

A Living Hell
BBC2, 11.20pm

Professor Lewis Wolpert continues this fascinating and sympathetic series on the possible causes of clinical depression, which strikes one in five of us — "but over half of these are never diagnosed and treated". Often patients don't seek help because they feel ashamed: suffering perhaps from physical symptoms such as fatigue which don't seem worth talking about. "But," says Wolpert, "you can start getting physically ill because you are depressed." Hardest hit are new mothers, but these weary, often suicidal victims of the so-called "baby blues" can be helped. Antidepressants are the most common treatment but there are many physical causes (such as hormone deficiencies) to be considered as well. **Elizabeth Cowley**

RADIO CHOICE

Crufts: The Business
Radio 4, 11am

The last part of this series gets down to the nitty gritty: how much money is there in all those hours of grooming that lead up to the show? On the face of it the answer is not that much, given that even the Supreme Champion at Crufts gets only £175 in prize money for winning, though there is nothing to indicate whether the dog thinks this is a large or small sum of money. Of course the real cash is not in the winning but in the exploitation, and the presenter Jeremy Cherfas follows the excitement as the top dog is whisked away (to a pantechnicon decked out as a mobile television studio) to become part of a Pedigree Chum dogfood commercial that will be broadcast on ITV within a few hours of the prizegiving.

The Ramp
Radio 4, 9pm

Part two of Peter Day's case study on the development and building of a semiconductor factory for Intel. The subject may seem dry but Day keeps the techno-babble out of the script and thus produces a fascinating insight into the way companies operate in the computer field. The series got an unexpected bonus, reflected tonight, when manufacturers in South-East Asia started flooding the market with cheap microchips, thus throwing that old-fashioned tool, a spanner, into the works of Intel's planning for its new Irish plant. Intel's chairman, Andy Grove, is sanguine: when prices fall he depends on his sales people to keep the market for chips alive. But at what price, in the context of a £1 billion factory investment? **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00pm** Jo Whiley **2.00** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Dave Pearce **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Dave Pearce **8.00** Mary Anne Hobbs: The Evening Session **10.00** Movie Update with Mark Kermode **10.10** John Peel **12.00am** Gilles Peterson **2.00** Clive Warren **4.00** Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00pm** Jimmy Young **2.00** Ed Stewart **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** Nick Barraclough **8.00** Mike Harding **9.00** Barry Gordy's Motown (3/4) **10.00** Top of the Pops 2 on 2 **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.00am** Lynn Parsons **3.00** Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00pm** The Midday News with Allen Robb **1.00** Ruscoe and Co **4.00** Drive with Peter Allen and Jane Garvey **7.00** News Extra **7.30** John Inverdale's Football Night. Commentary and reports on the latest action. Plus, the National Lottery Draw **10.00** Littlejohn. No-nonsense football talk on tonight's European and domestic action **11.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast **9.00** Scott Chisholm & Sally James **12.00pm** Let's Talk Pets **1.00** Anna Raeburn **4.00** The Sports Zone **7.00** Offside with Sebastian Coe **8.00** The Big Issues **10.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Russ Williams **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **6.45** Pete and Geoff **10.00** Mark Forrest **1.00am** James Merritt **4.30** Richard Allen

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** Westway **8.20** Off the Shelf: Letters From My Windmill **8.35** One Planet **9.00** World News **9.05** Sounds Right **9.20** World Ranking **9.50** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Britain Today **10.45** Legal World **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Sports International **12.00pm** World News **12.05** Outlook **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** World News **2.05** One Planet **2.30** Meridian Live **3.00** World News **3.05** Sports Round-Up **3.15** From Our Own Correspondent **3.30** Jazzmatazz **4.00** World News **4.15** Insight **4.30** Multitrack: X-Press **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** World News **6.15** Britain Today **6.30** Sports International **7.00** World News **7.05** One Planet **7.30** Legal World **7.45** Off the Shelf: Letters From My Windmill **8.00** Newshour **9.00** World News **9.05** World Business Report **9.20** Britain Today **9.30** On Screen **10.00** World News **10.15** Sports Round-Up **10.30** Multitrack: X-Press **11.00** World News **11.05** Outlook **11.45** Insight **12.00am** The World Today **12.30** One Planet **12.55** My Century **1.00** The World Today **1.30** Meridian Live **2.00** The World Today **2.30** Everywoman **3.00** The World Today **3.20** Sports Round-Up **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. Soothing music and information updates **8.00** Henry Kelly. Includes The Hall of Fame Hour and CD of the Week **12.00pm** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones spins listeners' favourites **2.00** Concerto. Haydn (Cello Concerto No 2 in D major) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Including information updates, Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance **6.30** Newsnight. Headlines, arts news and guests **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces easy-listening sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Alwyn (Festival March. Brahms (Piano Concerto No 2 in B flat major): Dvorak (Symphony No 4 in D minor) **11.00** Mann at Night. Music and conversation through the small hours with Alan Mann **2.00am** Concerto. Haydn (Cello Concerto No 2 in D major) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air Petroc Trelawny previews this year's Cardiff Singer of the World contest as the successful candidates for the competition are announced
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Brahms (Tragic Overture); Godowsky (Pastorale in G; Minuet in G minor, Renaissance); Tippett (Fantasia Concertante on a Theme of Corelli)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Kyung-Wha Chung
11.00 Sound Stories: Indian Summers Giuseppe Verdi was famously persuaded out of virtual retirement by his collaborator, Arrigo Boito
12.00pm Composer of the Week: Delius
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert A concert given at last year's Aldeburgh Festival by Ilya Itin, piano. Scriabin (Etudes, Op 8: Nos 2 and 4; Piano Sonata No 2, Sonata-Fantasia, Two Poems, Op 32); Rachmaninov (Melody in E, Op 3 No 3; Moment musical in E flat minor, Op 16 No 2; Daisies, Op 38 No 3; Piano Sonata No 2 in B flat minor, Op 36, revised version) (r)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC National Orchestra of Wales under David Atherton, Gyorgy Pauk, violin. Smetana (Vltava, Ma Vlast); Grieg (Peer Gynt Suite No 1); Bartok (Violin Concerto No 2); Tchaikovsky (Symphony No 2 in C minor, Little Russian)
4.00 Choral Evensong Live from Norwich Cathedral. Organist and master of the music David Dunnett
5.00 In Tune Sean Rafferty celebrates the 250th anniversary of the librettist Lorenzo da Ponte
7.30 Performance on 3: The Magic Fountain Scottish Opera gives the British stage premiere of Delius's colourful interpretation of themes drawn from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Stephen Allen, tenor, Anne Mason, soprano, Stafford Dean, bass, Jonathan Veira, bass, Scottish Opera Chorus and Orchestra under Richard Armstrong
9.40 Postscript: Radio Poems — The Blue Monkeys of Zomba by Mark Beeson (3/5)
10.00 Ensemble Penny Gore introduces a recital by Tasmin Little, violin, and Piers Lane, piano. Kreisler (Praeludium and Allegro); Beethoven (Violin Sonata in F, Op 24, Spring); Elgar (Salut d'amour); Falla (Spanish Dance); Ponce (Estrellita)
10.45 Night Waves
11.30 Jazz Notes Alyn Shipton presents the final part of a concert by the Alan Ganley Big Band
12.00am Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (r)
1.00 Through the Night 1.00 Mieczyslaw Horszowski, piano, Henryk Szeryng, violin, Polish NRSO under Jan Krenz. Mozart (Piano Concerto No 20 in D minor, K466; Berg (Violin Concerto) **1.55** Brahms (Der Tod, das ist die kuhle Nacht) **2.00** Brahms (Chorale Preludes, Op 122) **2.30** Rued Langgaard (Symphony No 4, Fall of the Leaf) **3.00** Schools: Time and Tune **3.20** Together **3.40** Dance Workshop **4.00** The Song Tree **4.20** Scottish Resources 10-12 **4.40** Talking Points **5.00** Schmelzer (Lamento sopra la morte Ferdinandi III **5.05** Szymanowski (Piano Sonata No 3)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today Rural issues, with Rachel Morgan
6.00 Today with James Naughtie and John Humphrys
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament
9.00 Budget Call: 0870 010 0444 Vincent Duggleby and his team answer questions on how the Budget will affect everyday finances
9.45 (LW) Daily Service
9.45 (FM) Serial: The Pleasures of the Table Part three. Liza Ross reads from the work of the American food writer M.F.K. Fisher
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray and guests
11.00 Crufts: The Business How the dogs, their owners and the organisers prepare for the big event. See Choice (3/3)
11.30 Our Man At Wembley Another chance to hear Bill Matthews' 1940s comedy about a working-class Lancashire lad who tries for a sports commentator's job at the BBC. Alistair McGowan, Jon Glover and John Salthouse star (1/4) (r)
12.00pm (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News 12.04 You and Yours Consumer news and investigations
1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Inspiration! With Adam Hart-Davis, Lewis Wolpert, Tim Radford and David Martill
2.00 The Archers Yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: Women on Love — The Love a Life Can Show Below Hattie Naylor's tale inspired by Emily Dickinson, in which a romantic novelist takes her passion for food too far
3.00 Gardeners' Question Time (r)
3.30 Shorelines The only export of the Outer Hebrides — derived from the tangleweed cast ashore (r)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Anna Massey narrates part 48 of the history of Britain (r)
4.00 All in the Mind Professor Anthony Clare explores the limits of the human mind
4.30 Thinking Allowed Laurie Taylor and guests think the unthinkable about society
5.00 PM with Kevin Bocquet and Chris Lowe
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Ballylenon Christopher Fitz-Simon's comedy (r)
7.00 The Archers George sticks his oar in
7.15 Front Row The arts programme
7.45 The Cry of the Bittern Tim Jackson's environmental drama. Broadcast earlier as part of *Woman's Hour* (18/30) (r)
8.00 The Moral Maze Michael Buerk presents ethical debate, with Madsen Pirie, Janet Daley, Ian Hargreaves and David Cook
8.45 Lent Talks The Times columnist Will Self considers the story of the Passion and Resurrection from a secular point of view (4/7)
9.00 The Ramp Peter Day reports on the semiconductor crisis faced by Intel when developing its billion-pound silicon plant in Dublin. See Choice
9.30 Midweek Lively conversation with the *Times* columnist Libby Purves and guests (r)
10.00 The World Tonight Presented by Justin Webb
10.40 Budget Response From the Shadow Chancellor
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Ernest Hemingway Centenary — The Sun Also Rises John Sharian reads part eight of Hemingway's novel
11.00 Late Night on 4: Truly, Madly, Bletchley Julian Dutton's comedy based in the town of Bletchley. With Liz Fraser and Peter Hugo-Daly (4/6) (r)
11.15 MacFlintock's Palace The stage manager's prize possession goes missing (5/6)
11.30 (FM) Mammon Satirical comedy (4/6) (r)
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament Political update
12.00am News 12.30 The Late Book: Golf Dreams Part two. The American novelist John Updike's passion for golf (2/4) (r)
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Perry Cleveland-Peck, Ian Hughes, Gillian Maxey, Jane Gregory and Barry O'Keefe



Fine bouquet but body recalls other vintages

Maybe the most perplexing thing about *Wonderful You* (ITV), which was making itself comfy in the Tuesday night slot vacated by *News at Ten*, is how watchable it was by the end of its 60 minutes even though it pivoted on the life of a man whom you spent most of the opening episode of this latest middle-class, thirtysomething, relationship drama wanting to slap very hard; possibly with a wheeljack.

Henry (Richard Lumsden) is worried about turning 30, an event which happens to be about a month away. This may well be grounds for anxiety, but you soon realise that the reason why Henry's so very anxious is that he's clearly afflicted by an unfortunate disease which results in his physical and mental ages moving in opposite directions.

At the age of 29 he already exhibits the emotional maturity of a 13-year-old; so you can see that by the time he's, say, 35, he'll have regressed to behaving like a nine-year-old; and when he turns 40 he will probably have to start learning his alphabet all over again. In fact he's so mentally inert that it actually requires a friend to point out to him that this apparently cataclysmic birthday is imminent.

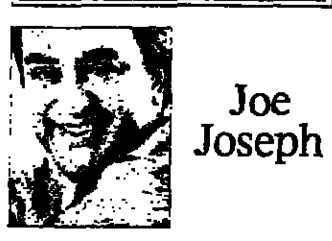
There are people out there who face up to the prospect of brutal torture, tribal massacre, and life-threatening disease more calmly that Henry is facing up to the prospect of turning 30. At times the whole thing feels like part of the improvisation show *Whose Line Is It Anyway*, where the stiff challenge facing the panel this week is to create an hour-long drama out of one slightly hysterical man's fears of turning 30.

How come none of the other characters — who have both motive and opportunity — feels inclined to slap him hard with a wheeljack? In one of the show's many wild coincidences, Henry bumps into Clare (Lucy Akhurst), a sleek blonde whom he hasn't seen since they were at Poly together, just hours after he tried to contact her as part of his new strategy to gather what he assumes are the trappings of adulthood, including a partner.

Clare is on her way to the dentist. When we next see her she is back at her office desk with a dreamy, faraway look in her eye, as though she is conveying to us that Henry has awakened something passionate deep inside her. For this to be plausible, such romantic feelings could only have resulted from mild delirium triggered by the dentist's use of too hallucinogenic an anaesthetic.

The dialogue as well as the plot occasionally gets derailed into cliché, like a Scalextric car that has taken a corner too haphazardly. And it sometimes has the air of

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

painting-by-numbers drama, lurching from comedy to emotional conflict to slapstick to melodrama like a drunk trying to find his way home. Jilly Goolden would take one sip and detect hints of *Cold Feet* and *Friends*, with base notes of *This Life* and *Thirtysomething*: even Lisa Kudrow's dipsy folk-songs find an echo in Henry's wine bar wailings.

To be fair, while Lumsden — as co-writer of *Wonderful You* — has given himself the biggest part, it is also the soppiest part. And given that the characters are mostly off-the-peg rather than bespoke (Greg Wise plays the successful young accountant, black Porsche, lunches at Conran's Bluebird restaurant; there's the couple who have been together for seven years — the man isn't ready for marriage, the woman is; there is Henry and his best friend, Heather, compiling the lists which are now mandatory in all thirtysomething drama — in this case their respective "ten worst shags"), it is a testament to the quality of the cast that they carry it off so well.

Pacy direction from Matt Lipsey, a seductively moody soundtrack, and a glossy filmic sheen also lull you into the lives of these North Londoners by the end of this first episode. There are enough loose threads left dangling to lure you into tuning in next week and the weeks after that, too. I'd like to think that this is because of the power of the central character, Henry. But I'm not sure if it isn't in spite of it.

Jackson Pollock was also a tormented soul, but at least you feel he had plenty to be tormented about. **Jackson Pollock — Love and Death on Long Island**, Teresa Griffiths's film for BBC2's *Close Up*, was a graceful and moving collage of reminiscences from friends, colleagues, lovers and critics of America's most famous artist. Postwar America, hungry for cultural heroes, fêted this Wyoming farmer's boy along with his fellow hard-living, rebellious Abstract Expressionists.

As a result, Pollock became America's first celebrity artist. But he also became America's first celebrity-artist casualty. His cult status was sealed when he died, drunk, in a car crash at the age of 44, the finale to a life of alcoholism, emotional confusion, and his inability to cope with the adulation his art aroused. It was a pattern of fame-and-fall later mirrored by James Dean, Marilyn Monroe and others cursed by 20th-century American celebrity.

Unlike, say, Damien Hirst, who descended on the art world as a fully formed commercial artist convinced of his own genius and price tag, Pollock was never even certain that his manner of expressing his feelings on the canvas rather than illustrating them on the canvas ever constituted proper art. It's the one thing he and his critics agree on. But what infuriates Pollock's detractors is that much as though his art might look like your five-year-old could do it, none of the artists who mimicked his style when he became famous overnight managed to produce a painting that anyone would want to look at once, let alone twice.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) **9.00** Kilroy (T) **9.45** Wipeout **10.10** The Vanessa Show (T) **10.55** News (T) **11.00** Change That **11.25** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) **11.55** News (T) **12.00pm** Call My Bluff (90720) **12.30** Top Tip Challenge (r) (4770045) **12.55** The Weather Show (T) (53814045)

1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (39768)

1.30 Regional News; Weather (59663720)

1.40 Neighbours (T) (35710478)

2.05 Ironside (r) (5924923)

2.55 Through the Keyhole (r) (T) (6164818)

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays **3.45** Little Monsters **3.50** ChuckleVision **4.10** See It, Saw It **4.35** The Wild House **5.00** Newsround **5.10** Blue Peter

5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (931478)

6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (671)

6.30 Regional News Magazine (923)

7.00 Holiday on a Shoestring Craig Doyle visits Kenya and Honor Blackman travels to the Austrian Tyrol (T) (4768)

7.30 Tomorrow's World Craig Doyle reports on the ongoing search for tropical fruits in the rainforests (T) (107)

8.00 Changing Rooms Interior design challenge from Chingford, Essex (r) (T) (6316)

8.30 Comic Relief Jukebox (T) (386590)

8.50 The National Lottery: Greatest Hits Music by top bands of the 1970s and 1980s (182381)

9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (8519)

9.30 Budget Response (T) (926213)

9.35 Jasper Carrott: Back to the Front More stand-up comedy (3/6) (T) (980519)

10.09 National Lottery Update (885132)

10.10 The X Files Mulder is held hostage by a man under the delusion that his boss is really a monster (T) (862294)

10.55 Five Go Mad in the Kitchen With Ruby Wax. Last in series (r) (T) (491590)

11.00 Harry Enfield's Television Programme Comedy sketches (r) (T) (7836)



Blonde bombshell Pamela Anderson gets the Wax treatment (11.30pm)

11.30 Ruby Wax Meets Pamela Anderson Another chance to see the interview with the *Baywatch* star (r) (T) (87881)

12.00am Deadly Past (1995) An ex-con makes the mistake of embarking on an adulterous fling with his former lover. Thriller, starring Dedee Pfeiffer. Directed by Tibor Takacs (T) (8314017)

1.20 Weather (1225430)

1.25 BBC News 24 (35524091)

10.55 The State (435872) **11.25 Five Go Mad in the Kitchen** (r) (T) (277132) **11.30 Harry Enfield's Television Programme** (r) (T) (87861) **12.00am Ruby Wax Meets Pamela Anderson** (r) (T) (77169) **12.30 FILM: Deadly Past** (T) (8274121) **1.50 News** (T) (1468362) **1.55-6.00 BBC News 24** (28451968)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Pingu (7542768) **7.05** Teletubbies (4100148) **7.30** Snorks (8497381) **7.50** The Really Wild Show (3505652) **8.18** Rewind (3946923) **8.20** Taz-Mania (5193942) **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (1214590) **8.50** Pingu (1210774) **9.00** Environment (7832590) **9.10** What? Where? When? Why? (7756126) **9.25** The Art (4587316) **9.45** Words and Pictures (8885126) **10.00** Teletubbies (96519) **10.30** Numbertime (9320300) **10.45** Cats' Eyes (9325855) **11.00** Around Scotland (3346300) **11.20** The Geography Programme (3293300) **11.40** Science in Action (6674381) **12.00pm** Revista (5399942) **12.15** Hallo aus Berlin (4126584) **12.30** Working Lunch (29774)

1.00 Children's BBC: Brum (68060720)

1.10 War Walks The events of the Battle of the Somme (r) (T) (41971316)

1.40 Hart-Davis on History A Welsh geology hunt (35724671)

2.10 Awash with Colour A visit to the Ulster American Folk Park (58584720)

2.40 News; Weather (T) (3338010)

2.45 Westminster (T) (5010497)

3.50 News; Weather (T) (6297497)

3.55 Kaye Advice show (9693687)

4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (T) (6372132)

4.55 Esther (T) (5284213)

5.30 Today's the Day (T) (300)

6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation Clara's imaginary friend gets the crew into trouble (r) (T) (844720)

6.45 Buffy the Vampire Slayer (T) (344045)

7.30 Sophie Grigson's Herbs Thai chicken curry with kaffir lime (T) (749)

8.00 University Challenge Sheffield University v Trinity College, Cambridge (T) (4958)

8.30 Looking Good Lowri Turner gives two viewers a new look (T) (8215)

9.00 Amsterdamage Documentary on the 24-hour party city of Amsterdam (T) (772671)



Petra Doring, the boss of the failed jewellery firm Cabouchon (9.50pm)

9.50 Trouble at the Top The demise of the direct-selling jewellery firm Cabouchon (T) (519565)

10.30 Budget Response (T) (215652)

10.35 Newsnight (T) (738403)

11.20 A Living Hell An investigation into a case of childhood depression (2/3) (884836)

11.55 Weather (973584)

12.00am Despatch Box (68411)

12.30 BBC Learning Zone: Open University: The Science of Climate? **1.00** A Winter Sleep **1.30** Breathing Deeply. **2.00** Schools: Science and Sport: Sportsbank **3.00** Short Circuit **4.00** Languages: Talk Spanish 3-6 **5.00** Business and Training: RCN Nursing Updates **5.45** Open University: A Tale of Four Cities **6.10** Bloodlines: A Family Legacy **6.35** First Steps to Autonomy

HTV

5.30am ITV Morning News (29942)

6.00 GMTV (5951045)

9.25 Trisha (T) (8183774)

10.30 This Morning (T) (44632768)

12.15pm HTV News (T) (4113010)

12.30 ITV Lunchtime News (T) (4692213)

12.55 Shortland Street Grace's career is at risk (9029923)

1.30 Home and Away The course of true love falters (T) (35805590)

1.55 The Jerry Springer Show Outrageous US talk show (T) (1985774)

2.40 Wheel of Fortune (T) (9213382)

3.10 ITV News Headlines (T) (4864107)

3.15 HTV News (T) (4863478)

3.20 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (4877671) **3.30** Teddybears (9837584) **3.40** Jumanji (9505478) **4.05** Hey Arnold! (6292942) **4.30** Mad for It (774)

5.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (2300)

5.30 WEST: Live and Local New series. Reports from a different location in the region each week; Weather (126)

5.30 WALES: Up Beat New series. Entertainment magazine (1/6) (T) (126)

5.59 HTV Crimestoppers (533126)

6.00 HTV News (T) (869)

6.30 ITV Evening News; Weather (T) (519)

7.00 Emmerdale (T) (9836)

7.30 Coronation Street Leanne thinks she's pregnant (T) (403)

8.00 Who Wants To Be a Millionaire? Big-prize game show (T) (697720)



Pierce Brosnan makes his debut as James Bond, 007 (8.35pm)

8.35 Goldeneye (1995) Network premiere of this James Bond thriller starring Pierce Brosnan. Here, 007 visits Russia to locate the source of a new satellite designed to destroy the world's electronic devices — but ends up face to face with a figure from the past determined to thwart his plans. With Sean Bean, Robbie Coltrane, Judi Dench and Izabella Scorupco. Martin Campbell directs (T) (10507768)

11.00 ITV Nightly News; Weather (T) (684768)

11.20 Budget Response By the Shadow Chancellor, Francis Maude (270229)

11.25 HTV News and Weather (T) (578768)

11.35 The Big Match FA Cup quarter-final replays (335720)

12.40am The Virgin Soldiers (1969) Comedy chronicling the exploits of National Service recruits in 1960 Singapore. With Hywel Bennett and Lynn Redgrave. Directed by John Dexter (160140)

2.25 Cover Girl Killer (1959) Police set a trap for a vicious serial killer preying on beautiful models. Thriller, starring Harry H. Corbett and Felicity Young. Directed by Terry Bishop (3696091)

3.30 Trisha Shown earlier (r) (T) (54275)

4.30 The Making of Hard Rain Behind the scenes of the thriller (46656237)

4.55 ITV Nightscreen Behind the scenes of ITV programmes (43031904)

5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (35324)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:

12.20-12.30pm Central News; Weather (7368478)

12.55 Home and Away (4773132)

1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4272126)

2.10-2.40 Echo Point (56684774)

3.15-3.20 Central News (4863478)

5.30 Shortland Street (126)

6.00-6.30 Central News at Six; Weather (869)

11.25-11.35 Central News; Weather (578768)

4.25am Central Jobfinder '99 (3716053)

5.25-5.30 Asian Eye (7902275)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:

12.15-12.27pm Westcountry News; Weather (4113010)

12.27-12.30 Small Talk, Big Talk (7376497)

12.55 Westcountry Lunchtime Live (4773132)

1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4272126)

2.10-2.40 Home and Away (56684774)

3.15-3.20 Westcountry News; Weather (4863478)

4.58-5.00 Birthday People (7042229)

5.30 Peter Gorton for Starters (126)

6.00-6.30 Westcountry Live; Weather (869)

11.25-11.35 Westcountry News; Weather (578768)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** Weather (4113010) **5.30 Country Vets** (4/6) (r) (126) **6.00-6.30 Meridian Tonight** (T) (869) **7.29-7.30 Meridian Weather** (289213) **11.25-11.35 Meridian News;** Weather (T) (578768) **5.00am-5.30 Freescreen** (T) (35324)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (7370213) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (7368478) **5.30 Whipsnade** (7/13) (T) (126) **5.58 Anglia Weather** (T) (533126) **6.00-6.30 Anglia News** (T) (869) **11.19-11.20 Anglia Air Watch** (273316) **11.25-11.35 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (578768)

S4C

Starts: **6.00am Sesame Street** (r) (88993720) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (67953749) **9.00 Ysgolion:** Science for Today (97260861) **9.30 Rat-A-Tat-Tat** (74207045) **9.45 Book Box** (74122300) **10.00 Stage Two Science** (91987584) **10.15 All About Us** (91977107) **10.30 The French Programme: Channel Hopping** (51605768) **10.50 Stop, Look, Listen** (79262887) **11.00 Yr Amgylchedd** (15113316) **11.15 Tackling Technology** (15030039) **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (68478229) **12.00pm Bewitched** (r) (T) (97184497) **12.30 Sesame Street** (T) (26902942) **1.00 Planed Plant** (T) (67956836) **1.30 Earthscape** (T) (54836107) **1.40 FILM: Yellow Sky** (T) (79891229) **3.30 Collectors' Lot** (T) (67272720) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (67291855) **4.30 Dishes** (T) (67297039) **5.00 Planed Plant** (T) (90272565) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (67384519) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (93520652) **6.10 Heno** (T) (86010855) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (90365229) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (67298768) **8.00 Ffermio** (T) (90278749) **8.30 Pacio** (T) (90280584) **9.00 ER** (T) (37505590) **10.00 Brookside** (T) (72747942) **10.35 Sex and the City** (T) (35915045) **11.05 The 11 O'Clock Show** (88558942) **11.35 Michael Moore: The Awful Truth** (T) (92338107) **12.05am The Spying Game** (5/6) (T) (69372850) **12.40 Louder Than Bombs** (T) (91338492) **1.30 Football Italia: Mezzanotte** (54494237) **3.55 Trans World Sport** (30388362) **4.45 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

6.00am Sesame Street (72590)

7.00 The Big Breakfast (25519)

9.00 Schools: Science for Today (80774) **9.30** Rat-A-Tat-Tat (8882039) **9.45** Book Box (8870294) **10.00** Stage Two Science (9150132) **10.15** All About Us (9077855) **10.30** The French Programme (1631478) **10.50** Stop, Look, Listen (8901749) **11.00** First Edition VI (3284652) **11.15** Tackling Technology (3370403)

11.30 Powerhouse (T) (9294)

12.00pm Sesame Street (T) (96958)

12.30 Bewitched (r) (T) (41942)

1.00 Pet Rescue Highlights from the first series (T) (22478)

1.30 What's In It for Me: Brookie Basics Adult literacy (74127215)

1.50 Easy Money (1948) Comedy drama chronicling the fortunes of four very different football pools winners. Starring Jack Warner and Petula Clark. Directed by Bernard Knowles (T) (75321039)

3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (497)

4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (132)

4.30 Countdown (T) (3234590)

4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (5279381)

5.30 Pet Rescue (T) (768)



A new series starring Kerr Smith and Meredith Monroe (6pm)

6.00 Dawson's Creek New series of the drama charting the ups and downs of adolescence as experienced by a group of Boston teenagers (T) (860768)

6.50 T4ORCE A chance to catch up on the week's T4 entertainment (669300)

7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (149107)

7.55 The Outlaw Michael tries to find the source of a cigarette glow he saw in a tower block (T) (701887)

8.00 Brookside The Millennium Club finally opens (T) (6126)

8.30 Doors to Manual A trio of travelling viewers jet off for a weekend break in the 24-hour party city of Madrid, the Spanish capital (2/5) (T) (1861)

9.00 ER Mark Greene saves the life of a rent boy who has received a beating, and Kerry Weaver thinks she's home and dry for the job of chief (T) (6213)

10.00 CHOICE **Sex and the City** Carrie admits her infatuation with Mr Big (T) (97687)

10.30 Michael Moore: The Awful Truth Subversive reports (T) (30297)

11.00 The 11 O'Clock Show Up-to-the-minute satirical comedy (T) (6774)

11.30 So Graham Norton With guest Jason Orange (r) (T) (136316)

12.10am Louder Than Bombs A Cockney football coach working to popularise the game in Sarajevo (6568459)

1.00 boardstupid (r) (87275)

1.30 Football Italia: Mezzanotte Round-up of the week's action (52564411)

3.55 Trans World Sport (6283362)

4.45 Defenders of the Wild A Congolese national park (r) (T) (4693324)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport With Becky Anderson (7806890)

7.00 WideWorld Part 14. Skills and training needed before entering the workforce (r) (T) (8125403)

7.30 Milkshake! (2657229)

7.35 Wimzie's House (r) (4636958)

8.00 Havakazoo (r) (2779381)

8.30 Dappledown Farm (r) (2778652)

9.00 Hot Property (r) (T) (3412279)

9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (r) (4338300)

9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (9738359)

10.20 Sunset Beach Meg confronts Ben (T) (3525942)

11.10 Leeza (r) (9416251)

12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (2789768)

12.30 Family Affairs Clive goes on a blind date (r) (T); 5 News Update (1223590)

1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Jack and Rocky go to the Spectra fashion show (T) (8124774)

1.30 The Roseanne Show Outrageous chat with the bubbly comedian; 5 News Update (1222861)

2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (9101590)

2.30 Good Afternoon (1643478)

3.30 Moment of Truth: Caught in the Crossfire (TVM 1994) A journalist discovers a disturbing case of corruption in high places — little realising his investigations could threaten his safety. True-life drama, with Dennis Franz. Directed by Chuck Bowman (6293395)

5.20 Sunset Beach Shown earlier (r) (T); 5 News Update (3616768)

6.00 100 Per Cent James Bond Special Computer-generated quiz themed on the Bond movies (r) (2372671)

6.30 Family Affairs Pete and Claire strike a deal (T) (2363923)

7.00 5 News; Weather Round-up of the day's stories (T) (9016478)

7.30 Natural Passions Jim Reid's efforts to preserve manatees (T); 5 News Update (2369107)

8.00 Terrors of the Deep Guide to the world's deadliest ocean creatures, from the great white shark and giant squid to lesser-known menaces such as the Australian box jellyfish (8470497)

9.00 Murder by Death (1976) Peter Sellers heads the all-star cast of Neil Simon's spoof whodunnit in which the world's greatest detectives are invited to the home of wealthy recluse Truman Capote to solve a murder. With Peter Falk, David Niven, Maggie Smith and Alec Guinness. Directed by Robert Moore (T); 5 News Update (81200045)

10.50 Melinda's Big Night In With Kele le Roc and Trevor Nelson (1629836)

11.30 UK Raw Satanic rituals and UFO hunters (4/10) (5197213)

12.00am Live NHL Ice Hockey Pittsburgh Penguins v Carolina Hurricanes. Richard Orford and Todd Macklin present full coverage of this important Eastern Conference fixture (66652695)

4.40 The Movie Chart Show Patch Adams and Pleasantville (r) (92115633)

5.05 Move On Up (r) (32937985)

5.30 Close Encounters Documentary on the Alar tribe (r) (8744237)

SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (72497) 7.30 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (68478) 8.30 Hollywood Squares (45294) 9.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (55381) 10.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (53316) 11.00 Guilty! (60652) 12.00pm Jenny Jones (68229) 1.00 Mad About You (71768) 1.30 Jeopardy (73565) 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (35478) 3.00 Jenny Jones (82749) 4.00 Guilty! (94584) 5.00 Star Trek: Voyager (5229) 6.00 America's Dumbest Criminals (2881) 6.30 Friends (4823) 7.00 The Simpsons (6958) 7.30 The Simpsons (8497) 8.00 Mortal Kombat: Conquest (12478) 9.00 The X Files (25942) 10.00 Miami Uncovered (76589) 11.00 Friends (95213) 11.30 Star Trek: Voyager (23958) 12.30am The Commish (10508) 1.30 Long Play (2851445)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 51) Firestorm (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60) Fallen (1998)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59) Flubber (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58) Double Team (1997)

SKY PREMIER

6.00am The Bomber Boys (1995) (98816478) 7.45 Home Front (1987) (40675768) 9.30 Forever Love (1998) (32727213) 11.15 The Bomber Boys (1995) (48354107) 1.00pm Little Dorrit Part Two: Little Dorrit's Story (1987) (742768) 4.00 Home Front (1987) (1403) 6.00 Forever Love (1998) (63300) 7.30 Barry Norman's Film Night (9107) 8.00 Addicted to Love (1997) (59872) 10.00 Grosse Pointe Blank (1997) (106758) 11.50 Leo Tolstoy's Anna Karenina (1997) (757748) 1.40am The Proprietor (1996) (563694) 3.35 North Star (1995) (44081701)

SKY MOVIEMAX

5.25am White Dwarf (1995) (64883132) 7.00 Movie Magic (67565) 7.30 Femmes Fatales: Geena Davis (1609774) 8.15 Action Heroes: Sylvester Stallone (2251652) 9.00 Yentl (1983) (95239855) 11.15 Snowboard Academy (1997) (49356565) 1.00pm Movie Magic (86836) 1.30 Femmes Fatales (5787316) 2.15 Action Heroes (7769107) 3.00 Yentl (1983) (68914872) 5.15 All The Winters That Have Been (1997) (64504956) 7.00 Snowboard Academy (1997) (11671) 8.30 E! (6381) 9.00 Mars Attacks! (1996) (98701) 11.00 Quicksilver Highway (1997) (52958) 12.30am Banished Behind Bars (1995) (327508) 2.05 Someone Else's America (1995) (455782) 3.40 Friday the 13th (1980) (718324)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm Notorious (1946) (7152671) 6.00 City That Never Sleeps (1953) (2555720) 8.00 The Lighthorsemen (1987) (2567565) 10.00 Giant (1956) (15920890) 1.15am Hollywood Aliens and Monsters (3382896) 2.55 Abbott and Costello Meet Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (1953) (19248140) 4.15 The Europeans (1979) (4603546)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Vanya on 42nd Street (1994) (4187294) 8.00 The Unbelievable Truth (1989) (22646720) 9.35 The Music of Chance (1993) (5078497) 11.20 The Hull to Hornsea (5872774) 11.30 Things Change (1988) (7772652) 1.10am Sweet Smell of Success (1957) (6454625) 2.45 Red Beard (1965) (48810633)

TNT

9.00pm Two Weeks In Another Town (1962) (33922942) 11.00 The Sunshine Boys (1975) (68904497) 1.15am Your Cheatin' Heart (1964) (45405324) 3.00 Two Weeks in Another Town (1962) (17261362) 5.00 Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre 7.15 Wrestling 8.15 You're On Sky Sports! 9.00 Racing News 9.30 Aerobics 10.00 Big Fight Countdown 10.30 Inside Scottish Football 11.30 Snowboarding 12.00pm Aerobics 12.30 Big Fight Countdown 1.00 Premier Snooker League 3.00 Inside Scottish Football 4.00 Superbouts 5.00 Wrestling 6.00 Sports Centre. 6.30 European Tour Weekly 7.00 World Pool League 8.00 Ringside Special 9.30 Sports Auction Preview 10.00 Sports Centre 10.15 You're On Sky Sports! 11.00 World Pool League 12.00am Sports Centre. 12.15 You're On Sky Sports! 1.00 Rugby League World 2.30 World Pool League 3.30 Sports Centre 3.45 Close

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics 7.30 Sports Centre 7.45 Racing News 8.15 Fastrax 8.45 Sports Centre 9.00 Fish TV 10.00 World Motor Sport 1.00pm Sports Unlimited 2.00 Golf Extra 5.00 Australian Rally Championship 5.30 Watersports World 6.30 Sports Auction Preview 7.00 FA Cup Football: Chelsea v Man Utd 10.00 Watersports World 11.00 Cycling 11.30 Sports Auction Preview 12.00am European Tour Golf Weekly 12.30 Ringside Special 2.00 Sports Centre 2.15 Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00pm Wrestling 1.00 Fish TV 2.00 The Entertainers 2.30 Superbouts 3.30 Snowboarding 4.00 Premier Snooker League 6.00 Cycling 6.30 Fish TV 7.30 Unbelievable Sports 8.00 Rugby League World 9.30 Australian Rally Championship 10.00 FA Cup Final Classics 11.30 Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Biathlon 8.30 Live Women's Skiing 9.30 Ski-Jumping 11.00 Women's Skiing 11.30 Live Skiing 12.30pm Golf 1.30 Tennis 2.00 Tennis 4.15 Women's Skiing 5.00 Skiing 6.00 Live Tennis 8.00 Live Women's Tennis 9.30 Boxing 10.30 Strongman 11.30 Tractor Pulling 12.30am Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads 7.30 Neighbours 7.55 EastEnders 8.30 The Bill 9.30 When the Boat Comes In 10.30 Rhoda 11.00 Dallas 11.55 Neighbours 12.25pm EastEnders 1.00 Juliet Bravo 2.00 Dallas 2.55 The Bill 3.55 EastEnders 4.30 Rhoda 5.00 All Creatures Great and Small 6.00 Dynasty 7.00 Ever Decreasing Circles 7.40 Dad's Army 8.20 The British Empire 9.00 Men Behaving Badly 9.40 Men Behaving Badly 10.20 Only Fools and Horses 12.05am The Bill 1.05 Dangerfield 2.00 Dangerfield 3.00 Shopping with Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Within These Walls 7.00 Holding the Fort 7.30 Doctor At Large 8.00 Hallelujah 8.30 The Many Wives of Patrick 9.00 Classic Coronation Street 9.30 Emmerdale Farm 10.00 Upstairs, Downstairs 11.00 The Gentle Touch 12.00pm Classic Coronation Street 12.30 Emmerdale Farm 1.00 The Many Wives of Patrick 1.30 Me and My Girl 2.00 Upstairs, Downstairs 3.00 Love Boat 4.00 The Professionals 5.00 Hart to Hart 6.00 Emmerdale Farm 6.30 Classic Coronation Street 7.00 The Professionals 8.00 Benny Hill Show 9.00 The Sweeney 10.00 Brian Conley Show 10.30 Wheeltappers and Shunters' 11.00 Men and Motors

Michele Lee, Buddy Hackett and Dean Jones accompany the loveable Volkswagen in *The Love Bug* (Disney Channel, 7pm)

CARLTON SELECT

5.00pm What's Cooking? 5.30 Gridlock 6.00 London Bridge 6.30 Our House 7.00 Boon 8.00 Men of the World 8.30 Superchefs 9.00 Head Over Heels 10.00 Pie in the Sky 11.00 Hill Street Blues 12.00am Grown Ups 12.30 Gridlock 1.00 Close

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Gummi Bears 6.25 Classic Toons 6.35 Tale Spin 7.00 Classic Toons 7.10 Aladdin 7.35 101 Dalmatians 8.00 Goof Troop 8.25 Classic Toons 8.45 New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh 9.00 The Adventures of Spot 9.05 Animal Shelf 9.15 Pocket Dragons 9.30 Bear in the Big Blue House 9.55 The Toothbrush Family 10.00 Bite Size 10.10 Rosie and Jim 10.30 The Big Garage 10.45 PB and J Otter 11.00 Sesame Street 12.00pm The Adventures of Spot 12.05 Animal Shelf 12.15 Pocket Dragons 12.30 Bear in the Big Blue House 12.55 The Toothbrush Family 1.00 Bite Size 1.10 Rosie and Jim 1.30 The Big Garage 1.45 PB and J Otter 2.00 New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh 2.30 Quack Pack 3.00 The Little Mermaid 3.30 An Attack 4.00 101 Dalmatians 4.30 Hercules: The TV Show 5.00 Recess 5.15 Pepper Ann 5.30 Smart Guy 6.00 Teen Angel 6.30 Boy Meets World 7.00 FILM: The Love Bug (1969) 8.20 Honey I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show 9.30 Dinosaurs 10.00 Home Improvement 10.30 The Wonder Years 11.00 Touched by an Angel 12.00am Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Adventures of Dodo 6.05 Power Rangers Turbo 6.55 Spiderman 7.20 Oggy and the Cockroaches 7.30 Donkey Kong Country 8.00 Hero Turtles 8.25 Incredible Hulk 8.50 Iron Man 9.15 Fantastic Four 9.40 X-Men 10.05 Casper 10.30 Oggy and the Cockroaches 10.55 Eek!Stravaganza 11.05 Bobby's World 11.30 Life with Louie 11.55 Home to Rent 12.05pm Dennis and Gnasher 12.30 Donkey Kong Country 1.00 Mowgli: New Adventures of Jungle Book 1.25 Ace Ventura 1.55 The Incredible Hulk 2.20 Iron Man 2.45 Fantastic Four 3.10 X-Men 3.30 X-Press 3.55 Spiderman 4.00 Goosebumps 4.25 Hero Turtles: The Next Mutation 4.50 Casper 5.00 Dennis and Gnasher 5.30 Ace Ventura 6.00 Donkey Kong Country 6.30 Eek!Stravaganza 6.55 Oggy and the Cockroaches 7.00 Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Rocko's Modern Life 6.30 Bruno the Kid 7.00 CatDog 7.30 Rugrats 8.00 The Wild Thornberrys 8.30 Arthur 9.00 CBBC 10.00 Wimzie's House 10.30 Papa Beaver Stories 11.00 The Magic School Bus 11.30 PB Bear etc: Budgie the Little Helicopter/Animal Antics/Family Ness 12.00pm Rugrats 12.30 Blue's Clues 1.00 Bananas in Pyjamas 1.30 Little Bear Stories 2.00 Paddington Bear/Lizzie's Library/Portland Bill/Mr Men 2.30 Children's BBC 3.00 Children's BBC 3.30 Doug 4.00 Three Friends and Jerry 4.30 Rugrats 5.00 Sister Sister 5.30 Kenan and Kel 6.00 Renford Rejects 6.30 Moesha 7.00 Close

BRAVO

8.00pm Martial Law 9.00 Extreme Championship Wrestling 9.30 Cops 10.00 The Late Lounge 10.30 Erotic Confessions 11.00 FILM: Adventures of a Private Eye (1977) 1.00am Erotic Confessions 1.30 The Late Lounge 2.00 Martial Law 3.00 FILM: Leprechaun (1993) 5.00 Extreme Championship Wrestling 5.30 Cops 6.00 Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Jenny 7.30 Grace Under Fire 8.00 Ellen 8.30 Spin City 9.00 Drop the Dead Donkey 9.30 Whose Line Is It Anyway? 10.00 Frasier 10.30 Cheers 11.00 Seinfeld 11.30 The Larry Sanders Show 12.00am Late Night with David Letterman 1.00 Taxi 1.30 Frontline 2.00 Dr Katz 2.30 Tibs and Fibs 3.00 Nightstand 3.30 Abbott and Costello 4.00 Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 8pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am Bloomberg Information Television 8.00 Sightings 9.00 Battlestar Galactica 10.00 Quantum Leap 11.00 Dark Shadows 11.30 The Ray Bradbury Theatre 12.00pm The Twilight Zone 1.00 Tales of the Unexpected 1.30 Tales of the Unexpected 2.00 Amazing Stories 2.30 Mysteries, Magic and Miracles 3.00 Battlestar Galactica 4.00 The Incredible Hulk 5.00 Sightings 6.00 Time Trax 7.00 Quantum Leap 8.00 VR 5 9.00 Leo 10.00 FILM: Maximum Overdrive (1986) 12.00am PSI Factor Chronicles of the Paranormal 1.00 FILM: Scanner Force (1991) 3.00 Dark Shadows 3.30 Dark Shadows 4.00 Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Today's Gourmet 6.30 Graham Kerr 7.00 Room Service 7.30 The Painted House 8.00 Wedding Story 8.30 A Baby Story 9.00 Simply Painting 9.30 The Great Gardening Plot 10.00 Global Gardens 10.30 Two's Country Cooking 11.00 The Iceman 11.25 The Home and Leisure House 11.30 Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures 12.00pm Our House Down Under 12.30 Antiques Trail 1.00 Our House 1.30 Hometime 2.00 New Yankee Workshop 2.30 Home Again with Bob Vila 3.00 This Old House with Steve and Norm 3.30 Charlie West Fishing

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures 4.30 A River Somewhere 5.00 Time Travellers 5.30 Terra X 6.00 Wildlife SOS 6.30 Adventures of the Quest 7.30 The Quest 8.00 Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious World 8.30 Creatures Fantastic 9.00 Searching for Lost Worlds 10.00 The Great Egyptians 11.00 SAS Australia. Battle for the Golden Road 12.00am On the Trail of the New Testament 1.00 Terra X 1.30 Time Travellers 2.00 Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00pm The New Adventures of Black Beauty 12.30 Hollywood Safari 1.30 Deadly Australians 2.00 All-Bird TV 2.30 Human/Nature 3.30 Harry's Practice 4.00 Jack Hanna's Zoo Life 4.30 Animal Doctor 5.00 Pet Rescue 5.30 Deadly Australians 6.00 The New Adventures of Black Beauty 6.30 Lassie 7.00 Rediscovery of the World 8.00 Animal Doctor 8.30 Horse Tales 9.00 Going Wild 9.30 Emergency Vets 10.00 Crocodile Hunter 11.00 Wildlife ER 11.30 Emergency Vets 12.00am Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm The Ghosts of Madagascar 7.30 The Nuba of Sudan 8.00 Polar Bear Alert 9.00 Bunny Allen: A Gypsy in Africa 10.00 Back Roads America: Northeast 11.00 On the Edge. Race for the Palio 11.30 On the Edge. Deep Flight 12.00am Extreme Earth: Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes

HISTORY

4.00pm Clash of Wings. The Cost of Incompetence 5.00 Classic Cars: Saab 6.00 Hadrian's Wall 7.00 The Monkey Trial

CARLTON FOOD

9.00am Food Network Daily 9.30 Coxon's Kitchen College 10.00 From the Ground Up 10.30 First Taste 11.00 Worrall Thompson Cooks 11.30 A Slice of the Action 12.00pm Food Network Daily 12.30 Scotland's Larder 1.00 Coxon's Kitchen College 1.30 The Cookshop 2.00 Mridula's Indian Kitchen 2.30 Food Network Daily 3.00 Loyd's Louisiana 3.30 A Slice of the Action 4.00 Thoroughly Modern British 4.30 Chez Bruno 5.00 Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny and Crew 6.20 10 Plus 2 6.40 Philbert the Frog 6.45 Greedysaurus and the Gang 6.50 Polka Dot Shorts 7.00 Practical Parenting 7.05 Professor Bubble 7.30 Caillou 7.35 Bug Alert 7.55 Practical Parenting 8.00 Barney and Friends 8.25 Babeloos 8.30 Tiny Tales 8.35 Tiny and Crew 8.50 Practical Parenting 9.00 Special Babies 9.30 The Roseanne Show Highlights 10.00 The Jerry Springer Show 10.50 Maury Povich 11.40 Brookside 12.10pm Through the Keyhole 12.40 Rescue 911 1.10 Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction 1.40 Maury Povich 2.30 Special Babies 3.00 The Living Room 3.50 Michael Cole 4.40 Through the Key hole 5.10 The Heat is On 5.40 Ready, Steady, Cook 6.15 The Jerry Springer Show 7.05 Rescue 911 7.35 Animal Rescue 8.00 LA Law 9.00 FILM: The Secretary (1994) 11.00 The Sex Files II 12.00am Close

ZEE TV

5.00am Lolly Pop 5.30 Hey Ha Ho 6.00 Out and About 6.30 Yoodle-Ae-Oo 7.00 Faith, Christian 7.30 News 8.00 India Business Report 8.30 Tara 9.00 Rishtey: The Love Stories 10.00 Sofia 11.00 Aashiana 11.30 Parampara 12.00pm FILM: Seeta Mariyam Margaret 3.00 Zee Bangla 3.30 Hum Paanch 4.00 Akbar Birbal 4.30 Ek Minute 5.00 Jungle Book 5.30 Mausam 6.00 Top of the Tops 6.30 Banegi Apni Baat 7.00 Baat Ban Jaye 7.30 It's My Choice 8.00 News 8.30 Amanat 9.00 Kaun Sa Rishta Kya Hai 10.00 Ikke Pe Ikka 10.30 Woh 11.00 Purukshetra 12.00am News 12.30 Yeh Hai Zindagi 1.00 Zee Bangla 1.30 Parmartan 2.00 FILM: Sua Bakhti 4.30 Narsayo



HOCKEY 48
Wendy plays a fair game in boys' side

SPORT



BADMINTON 54
Going back in time in pursuit of a Goode future

WEDNESDAY MARCH 10 1999

Gregory convinced by Collymore's illness



Collymore: mood swings

By Chris Moore

JOHN GREGORY, the Aston Villa manager, yesterday conceded for the first time that his stressed striker, Stan Collymore, is a "sick man". Yet the controversial England international could still play a part in the FA Carling Premiership game with Derby County at Pride Park tonight, despite being on anti-depressant medication.

"Until now, I have been totally sceptical about his need for counselling," Gregory said. "But I was totally ignorant about clinical depression and what it is to suffer from the problems Stan has been facing." Collymore has been attending a psychiatric clinic in Roehampton since breaking down before Villa's FA Cup fourth-round tie with Fulham on January 23. But it was only after an hour-long, heart-to-heart meeting with the former Liverpool and Nottingham Forest forward yesterday that the full extent of his problems became clear to his manager.

"The basic problem is that Stan sees the downside of everything because his mind is totally negative," Gregory said. "I didn't understand it before and I still find it hard to understand now. But that probably has something to do with the fact that I'm an optimist and the complete opposite.

"We sat down and Stan went through everything very articulately. He was able to make me appreciate what he was trying to tell me.

"He seems to have no control whatsoever over his mood swings, which can be violent at times. The highs can last for Saturday night. But then the lows kick in on Sunday morning, often for the rest of the week.

"Some days he wakes up and feels he could climb Everest. Other mornings he can't face climbing out of bed. He is clearly a sick man. I admit I have been sceptical about the whole thing. But I wouldn't want anyone to suffer what he is going through at the moment."

Yet Gregory also admitted that he could not see any solution to the situation. "I've been told that one in five people in the country suffer from clinical depression at some stage in their lives. Some get over it completely. Others never do." Despite six weeks of constant counselling, Gregory revealed that there is no obvious improvement in Collymore's conditon.

"Apparently it could last for two weeks, six months or five years. But what is clear is that it's not something that has suddenly happened to him. When he analyses his past, it's something he probably suffered from before he came to Villa," he said.

"Stan insists he's not interested in playing for any other club than Aston Villa. He just wants to get well again and be be a success here. But he feels he needs to continue with his treatment, and the doctors want him to keep attending the clinic at least three times a week.

"That's obviously not an ideal situation for any manager, not least because you can't afford to carry any passengers in the Premiership. We all need players 100 per cent committed who can be relied to go out on the pitch and fight for dear life to win games. Right now, I accept the most important thing for Stan is to get himself well again, which means more to him than any football match."

Collymore is likely to start on the bench at Derby tonight, when Villa are definitely without the injured Steve Watson, Ugo Ehiogu, Ian Taylor and Simon Grayson. But with doubts also surrounding the strikers, Dion Dublin and Julian Joachim, Gregory refused to discount the possibility of Collymore starting his first Premiership game since December 21.

Player complains of 'unfair treatment'

Beckham ends his silence over Hoddle

By Matt Dickinson and Russell Kempson

DAVID BECKHAM has used his first television interview since the World Cup to reveal his disappointment with Glenn Hoddle, the former England coach and his boyhood idol, although the only real surprise is that it has taken the Manchester United player until now to do so.

Beckham's frustration with Hoddle began to fester long before his fateful dismissal against Argentina, but it was Hoddle's failure to speak to him after that game that clearly annoyed him most, as viewers of *The Football Millionaires*, presented by Alan Hansen, will observe.

"I was gutted really," Beckham says. "More than anything I wanted to play the rest of the game. Tony Adams came and sat down with me afterwards because I was sat just outside the changing-room. He was brilliant. I will remember that because I needed it at the time.

"The manager did not actually speak to me after the game. Not at all. My family and friends were the only people who wanted to talk to me."

Hoddle's failure to offer a consoling arm not only perplexed Beckham but also Hansen, whose documentary will be broadcast on BBC1 at 10.30pm next Tuesday. "To be honest, it surprised me," Hansen said yesterday. "I think most managers would have had a word with him. Yes, Beckham was reckless, but the World Cup was over and you have to try to console the boy."

Beckham took a giant stride towards rebuilding his image last week when he swapped shirts with Diego Simeone, his Argentina adversary. "It's made me grow up a lot," he says. "It's made me realise a few things. Personally, I feel I was treated unfairly [by Hoddle].

"I think the majority [of supporters] dislike me. I do not know if it is jealousy or not, but I think there are more people who do not like me than like me. I would love to be really popular, but I do not know if that is going to happen now."

Otherwise, the programme merely skims the glossy surface of a rich footballer's glamorous life, with Michael Owen revealing little other than a talent for golf and snooker and a cheeky sense of humour. "Why play something if you are rubbish?" he chides Hansen as he thrashes him at snooker.

Dwight Yorke reveals that he is lonely in Manchester; Robbie Savage that you are set up for life after five years as a player in the FA Carling Premiership. Alan Shearer reveals nothing, as usual. Perhaps the most poignant moment is the appearance alongside her husband of Graeme Le Saux's wife, Mariana. Hopefully, Robbie Fowler will take notice.

Beckham and his United team-mates have another televised appointment tonight, when they play Chelsea in their FA Cup sixth-round replay at Stamford Bridge. With Paul Durkin once more in charge, the need for self-discipline will be of paramount importance.

Durkin handed out five bookings and two dismissals — Roberto Di Matteo, of Chelsea, and Paul Scholes — at Old Trafford on Sunday and is unlikely to shirk from similar measures should matters get out of hand.

It makes the return of Dennis Wise, the spiky Chelsea captain, a potentially decisive factor. If he behaves and produces the leadership qualities that he possesses, Chelsea should prosper; if he misbehaves and incurs Durkin's wrath, the balance will probably tip in United's favour.

Rovers fight drop ... 53

Wise has been sent off four times this season and missed 14 matches because of suspension. "It didn't help losing Roberto when we did, we were just starting to open up," Wise said yesterday. "It was difficult enough with 11 men, but with ten all we could do was sit back and try to absorb everything United threw at us. We battled well and it was very tight in the end. It always seems to be that way when we play United."

Chelsea's Cup record against United is poor. They have beaten them only once — a 2-0 victory in the sixth round in 1950 — and included in a succession of defeats is the 5-3 humiliation at Stamford Bridge in the third round last season.

If the replay is drawn after extra time, Arsenal's semi-final opponents will be decided by a penalty shoot-out. Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-manager, is suspended and Dan Petrescu is on international duty with Romania. However, Celestine Babayaro and Frank Leboeuf, like Wise, are available after suspension and Michael Duberry has recovered from injury.

LINKS
TELEVISION: Sky Sports 2 (7pm)

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1661

ACROSS
6 Omen; be omen of (7)
7 Thermonuclear device (1-4)
9 Replete (5)
10 Asian wind; its rain (7)
11 Arched-roof tracery style (3,8)
14 Really tough (person) (4,2,5)
17 One read to the disorderly once (4,3)
19 Asian leaf for chewing: paan (5)
21 Ring-shaped roll (5)
22 Nelson's flagship (7)

DOWN
1 Confer (authority on): a garment (4)
2 Cagliari its capital (8)
3 Helena's rival *(MND)* (6)
4 Feeble; slender (4)
5 Ophelia's father (8)
6 Nuisance (4)
8 Kindly (6)
11 (Mil.) leave (8)
12 Very relaxed (4-4)
13 Angel: chubby child (6)
15 Indigenous (6)
16 Stratagem (4)
18 One on same side (4)
20 Priam its king (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1660
ACROSS: 1 Staple 4 Ford 9 Enjoy 10 Air miss 11 Fiddler 12 Rambo 13 Restoration 17 Lager 19 Gibbous 22 Comrade 23 Alibi 24 Dual 25 Stench
DOWN: 1 Sheaf 2 Adjudge 3 Loyal 5 Odium 6 Despot 7 Hair trigger 8 Dry rot 14 Turban 15 Oxonian 16 Placid 18 Gamma 20 Blast 21 Swish



Lewis relieved his frustration with the American press with a two-fisted onslaught on the punchball yesterday. Photograph: Al Bello/Allsport

American reporters gang up on Lewis

From Srikumar Sen
Boxing Correspondent
in New York

LENNOX LEWIS will find out on Saturday whether he can achieve the recognition in the United States that he has always craved. He meets Evander Holyfield for the undisputed world heavyweight championship here at Madison Square Garden, but remains sceptical whether the Americans will give him his due if he wins, because the American press has always been against him and will find some reason to minimise his achievement.

Lewis has always been presented here as a heavyweight without the heart of a warrior. Those who saw his bout with Ray Mercer, who also gave Holyfield a hard fight, should have recognised Lewis's fighting qualities.

But the press has steadfastly refused to give him credit for any of his achievements. Since there is no valid reason for this, the only conclusion that one can come to is that it has something to do with the fact that Lewis might just become the first British fighter in 100 years to end the American domination of the most important division in boxing.

It is amazing that some sports writers, who are in the main genial and fair-minded in conversation, are unable to see there is no justification for the scorn, ridicule and even abuse they heap on Lewis.

The *Los Angeles Daily News* said after Lewis' successful defence of his title against Tony Tucker in Las Vegas: "Lewis won his fight against Tucker all right, but he lost whatever real right he has to call himself any part of a champion." Certainly my memory of that contest does not reflect this view.

Recently Wallace Matthews, of the *New York Daily Post* wrote: "He'll [Holyfield] take away Lewis' heart — not the hardest thing in the world to do." Matthews is a controversial personality but the views he expressed when this contest was first announced says it all: "*Lewis is a heavyweight title claimant without a portfolio and the richest boxer never to have had a fight of any consequence.*"

Clearly, Matthews had forgotten that Lewis took just one round to knock out Andrew Golota, who sent Riddick Bowe into retirement.

> 'He has always been presented here as being without a warrior's heart'

Rob Hughes ... 50
Lynne Truss ... 50

Matthews described Lewis as, "a boxer who talks a great game and fights a lousy one, and the latest in a long line of Englishmen who has tried to redeem his country in the sport it invented but finds it nearly impossible to win at."

Lewis refuses to hit back. He said: "They are supposed to be objective but they never are. What have they got against me other than the fact that I'm British? I think they are frightened I'm going to take the title away. They try to keep putting me down hoping that they will convince me of their view. "They question my heart because I don't go in there to take punishment. But the fight against Mercer, which was a hard one, should show them what I have got. I suppose they're used to seeing Evander Holyfield in hard fights all the time and they think that anyone who wins without taking punches is a nobody. I'm looking forward to showing them on Saturday."

Glenn McCrory, the former International Boxing Council cruiserweight champion, who is a member of the Sky commentary team, said: "It's ridiculous the kinds of things the Yanks are saying. After Lennox beat a tough guy like Zeljko Mavrovic a chap came up to me and said: "He'd be all right if he could fight."

McCrory points out that the fact that Lewis has been at the top, both as an amateur and a professional, for so long (15 years) and waited patiently for the unification contest with Holyfield shows heart. "The Americans are annoyed that ... instead of coming to the United States he returned to England to follow his career. But now they are frightened in case the title goes away and all the jokes about British heavyweights have to end."

The punchline of Matthews's tirade against Lewis knocks out his own argument. "Nothing," he said, "kills ticket sales quite like the reality that one of the fighters can't win." The bout was a sell-out within weeks of his article appearing in December 1998, the gate receipts of $12 million being the highest ever for New York and the second highest in the history of boxing.

BUSINESS · ARTS · BOOKS · SPORT · TELEVISION

THE TIMES

2

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY MARCH 11 1999

Who knows Kubrick? Arts, page 36

Race is on to be top Sport, page 32

Merger decisions to be removed from political influence

Small firms get £100m boost

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND HENRIETTA LAKE

STEPHEN BYERS, the Trade and Industry Secretary, yesterday launched a wide-ranging package of measures to boost business and declared that merger decisions were to be removed from political influence.

Mr Byers set out plans to give smaller companies a £100 million service to target their needs and a chief executive to lobby the Government on their issues. He outlined tax break plans for research and development, pledged targets for implementing the Competitiveness White Paper and reaffirmed plans to look at relaxing the rules on insolvency and bankruptcy to allow failed enterprises to restart businesses.

The Government is to open consultation on removing ministers from the decisions on mergers and acquisitions. Mr Byers said there was a strong case for establishing an independent competition authority that will rule on mergers and takeovers. At present the Trade and Industry Secretary has power of veto over takeovers. He said it was vital that the decisions "are not taken for short-term political considerations".

Ministers will retain powers to rule on takeovers that are in the public interest such as defence-related moves. The decision on which mergers are public-interest matters would rest with the competition authority.

The Small Business Service will offer businesses advice and help compliance with regulations, offer a new payroll to employers, making it easier for them to comply with PAYE and NI as well as providing guides and a telephone helpline service. A network of Inland Revenue Business Support Teams will run seminars and workshops, and a 48-hour response time to questions has been promised. There will also be discounts for electronically filed returns and a "one-stop-shop" for advice and information on the Internet.

Research and development by small companies is to get a £150 million boost by the introduction of a tax credit. Mr Byers said: "Science and the commercial exploitation of scientific research have a key role to play in improving Britain's competitive position."

Additionally, there will be enterprise management incentives to allow smaller companies to offer tax-advantaged shares.

The Competitiveness White Paper, the cornerstone of the Government's efforts to increase productivity, is to be opened to public scrutiny. Targets are to be set for the measures it has promised and the phone numbers of the relevant civil servants will be published for inquiries.

Adair Turner, Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry, welcomed the DTI initiatives but said it was vital they were implemented effectively. "While the Chancellor [on Tuesday] made investment and innovation his theme, it is the DTI which has a major responsibility for ensuring that wealth creation is at the heart of the policy agenda and for driving through most of the initiatives that affect business on a daily basis."

Tim Melville-Ross, Director-General of the Institute of Directors, said: "The IoD supports many of the measures announced ... to encourage enterprise and competition in the UK. In particular the proposals to increase the availability of finance for small and medium-sized enterprises and the enterprise management incentive scheme have the potential to be of real value to growth firms in the UK."

GORDON BROWN yesterday hit back at City critics who have claimed that his latest Budget had placed future interest rate cuts at risk, insisting that the Government was maintaining its tough fiscal stance.

The Chancellor played down the impact of promised tax cuts, arguing that the public finances are now "in a tighter stance than in November". He added: "That is something the Bank of England will clearly want to look at with some interest." However, the pound continued to strengthen against the dollar and the euro as traders concluded that the Budget tax cuts would make the Bank of England less inclined to reduce interest rates again.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies also gave warning that Mr Brown had an even "smaller margin for error" if he was to meet his own tough borrowing guidelines.

Budget impact 28; Graham Searjeant 31

BNP stuns rivals with audacious £22bn bid

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

FRANCE'S banking sector was in shock yesterday after Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP) launched a hostile Fr220 billion (£22.7 billion) bid to take over two of its biggest rivals, Société Générale and Paribas, themselves in merger talks.

The move would create the world's biggest bank in terms of its assets of £672 billion, and third-biggest in terms of its stock market capitalisation of more than £30 billion.

But with the three institutions employing a total of about 4,650 people in the City, hundreds of jobs in London would be under threat. The board of Paribas is to meet today to discuss the bid, while the Société Générale board is to meet on Friday. An insider said: "A three-way deal looks unlikely. BNP would either merge with Paribas or with Société Générale."

European Union competition authorities are certain to scrutinise a takeover that stunned a Paris business community unaccustomed to such predatory attacks. A French government source said that the deal, if it went ahead, would be given the green light in Paris and Brussels. "There is no difficulty about monopolies. There would still be other banks in France," the source said. "What's the problem?"

Yesterday André Lévy-Lang, the chairman of Paribas, and Daniel Bouton, chairman of Société Générale, who last month announced proposals to merge their banks and create SG Paribas, dismissed the BNP bid as "adventurous".

"We each studied carefully the possibility of a link-up with BNP. This option was dismissed," they said.

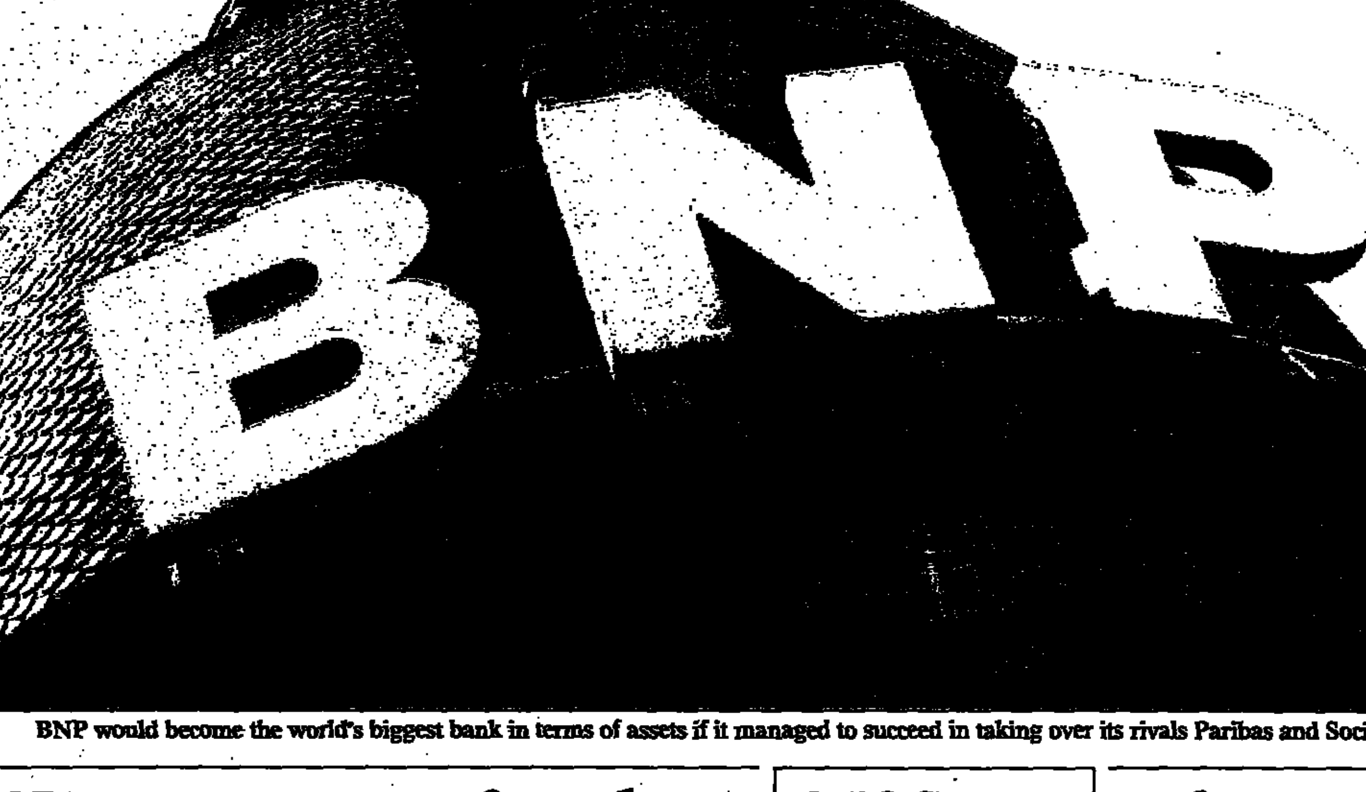
But AXA, the insurance group that is headed by Claude Bebear and is BNP's largest shareholder, is supporting the bid. AXA is also an important shareholder in Paribas, and originally favoured a merger between BNP and Paribas. AXA recently acquired Guardian Royal Exchange in the UK for £3.3 billion.

BNP's offer of 15 shares for seven Société Générale shares, and 11 for eight Paribas shares implies a 14 per cent premium for Société Générale shareholders and an 18 per cent premium for Paribas shareholders.

Michel Pebereau, chairman of BNP, said: "Our project is to create a European banking champion."

Société Générale and Paribas, which each employ 2000 people in the City, were planning to lay off a total of about 800 under their merger plans. BNP, which has 650 employees in London, is likely to shed more jobs.

Commentary, page 29



BNP would become the world's biggest bank in terms of assets if it managed to succeed in taking over its rivals Paribas and Société Générale

Archer 'lacked mandate'

BY CAROLINE MERRELL BANKING CORRESPONDENT

JAMES ARCHER, the banking son of the millionaire Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, was not authorised to trade on the Swedish stock market, it emerged yesterday.

Mr Archer and two fellow traders from Crédit Suisse First Boston (CSFB) were fired last week following an internal investigation in to dealers' manipulation of the Swedish stock market.

CSFB is to face a disciplinary committee in Sweden which has the power to expel, suspend or impose a fine of up to 10 million Swedish crowns (£750,000).

The deals centred on a paper company Stora and were aimed at moving its price to manipulate the Stockholm market index.

Pearson poised to seek share listing on Wall Street

BY RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

PEARSON, the media and information group, is considering seeking a New York share listing.

Marjorie Scardino, chief executive, said a dual listing in London and on Wall Street was appropriate following the £2.7 billion acquisition of the educational and business publishing interests of Simon & Schuster, with half of Pearson's business and 50 per cent of employees now based in America.

The possibility of a New York listing was raised as Pearson announced record operating profits of £389 million, a rise of 19 per cent before goodwill and exceptionals for 1998. Adjusted earnings per share rose by 20 per cent to 42p and the trading margin increased from 11.5 per cent to 13.1 per cent — fulfilling Mrs Scardino's promise to create double-digit earnings growth.

Despite the record profits Pearson shares fell 85p to £13.37 on profit-taking after a strong run.

Pearson also said yesterday that it was spending £14 million on a company-wide bonus for 13,000 eligible members of staff.

Mrs Scardino also gave some details of planned investments for the coming year, including a £30 million investment in the FT Group, £20 million in new programmes for Pearson Television and $400 million (£245 million) in new educational products, particularly for the US market.

The Pearson chief executive yesterday emphasised how in the past two years the company had been turned into a group focused on four businesses — Pearson TV, Pearson Education, FT Group and Penguin Group.

In 1998, Pearson more than doubled operating cashflow from £159 million to £392 million on a turnover up 4 per cent to £2.39 billion.

The total dividend rises 8 per cent to 21p a share with a 13p final, payable from adjusted earnings of 42p a share, up from 34.9p.

Commentary, page 29

M&S cuts number of UK goods

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

MARKS & SPENCER has admitted that it expects the proportion of its goods sourced from the UK to drop to just 50 per cent.

James Benfield, who has been appointed to the new role of UK marketing and operations director, said: "I don't think it'll be that long before we end up at an even split." The company sources 65 to 70 per cent of its goods from the UK. In 1980, it sourced 90 per cent from the UK.

Mr Benfield admitted that customer reaction is not always positive, saying: "There are certain parts of the country where it is a big issue. We have really agonised over the 'Made in Britain' thing. It has been very tortuous."

However, he said that there had been benefits from the switch, including an overall reduction of 3 per cent on prices.

Marketing man, page 31

Financial services firms hit by VAT on outsourcing

BY JASON NISSÉ

FINANCIAL services firms will have to pay hundreds of millions of pounds in extra VAT under a change in the rules on outsourcing slipped into the provisions of the Budget yesterday.

The move, which contradicts Gordon Brown's statement in the Budget that he was not widening the scope of VAT, could change the profit structure for many credit card firms and lead to increased charges for consumers.

A Statutory Instrument titled VAT (finance) and number 1999/595 was lodged in the House of Commons library on Tuesday afternoon — while the Chancellor was speaking — detailing the changes to the VAT regime.

According to Marc Welby, a tax partner at Ernst & Young, the accountants, the notice redefines deals to outsource the running of credit cards, debit cards and other credit management contracts, which were VAT exempt.

Deals running into billions of pounds will be affected. The largest managers of credit card services are First Data Resource in Southend-on-Sea, Essex, which manages credit cards for many high street banks. Other leading firms hit include Bank of Scotland, which runs card services for many smaller operators, and EDS, which has a large contract with Royal Bank of Scotland.

The move will also hit high street stores, football clubs and specialist organisations, such as Saga, which issue their own affinity cards.

Mr Welby said that he would not be surprised if the move did not being in more than £100 million of extra VAT a year for Customs & Excise. He also predicted the move would lead to legal actions from banks and card management companies, which would challenge attempts to extend the scope of VAT.

If the extra VAT was levied, the extra cost would almost certainly hit consumers though higher interest rates or charges on their credit transactions.

Customs & Excise was yesterday unable to detail how the change would affect credit card companies.

Business Today



Revolution by Marks
A marketing change of culture
Page 31

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6241.5	(+3.8)
Yield	2.55%	
FTSE All Share	2865.81	(+4.68)
Nikkei	15480.00	(+383.30)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9709.02	(+15.26)*
S&P Composite	1278.58	(-1.25)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	[illegible]	[illegible]
Long bond	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yield	5.58%*	(5.53%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	[illegible]	[illegible]
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	116.19	(115.63)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6262*	(1.6178)
London:		
$	1.6274	(1.6148)
€	1.4857	(1.4832)
SFr	2.3799	(2.3655)
Yen	195.07	(195.98)
£ Index	102.7	(102.5)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.0963*	(1.0887)
SFr	1.4560*	(1.4663)
Yen	119.87*	(121.06)
$ index	108.1	(108.7)

Tokyo close Yen 120.55

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (May)	$12.10	($11.75)

GOLD

London close	$282.75	($282.35)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates ......Page 28

THE IMPACT OF BUDGET 99

Brown left with limited room for manoeuvre

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE Budget has left Gordon Brown with an even "smaller margin for error" if the Chancellor is to meet his own tough borrowing guidelines, a leading economics think-tank claimed yesterday.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies said that with part of the funding for extra spending and tax cuts provided by a reduction in one of the Treasury's contingency funds, the Chancellor was leaving little room for manoeuvre if economic growth comes in below target.

The IFS also confirmed the City's suspicion that the Budget, which promised tax cuts and extra spending, had actually resulted in a loosening of the Government's fiscal stance over the next three years.

Andrew Dilnot, director of the IFS, said the combination of newly announced measures would result in an "overall loosening" of fiscal policy although he admitted that the impact would be "slight". Other economists added that much of the extra money for the Budget's tax and spending plans had been found from forecast revisions rather than "a genuine contraction of real core spending".

However, the Chancellor yesterday defended the Budget measures against accusations that they could force the Bank of England to postpone further interest rate cuts.

Mr Brown insisted that the overall fiscal stance was actually tighter in the next financial year as previously announced tax cuts come into effect and because of a downward revision to spending plans.

Mr Brown's arguments won some support among City analysts. Michael Saunders, UK economist at Salomon Smith Barney Citibank, said: "By keeping a cautious fiscal stance, the Chancellor is ensuring that base rates can fall further if inflation undershoots the Bank of England's forecast."

The markets, however, continued to ignore the Chancellor's protestations, sending the pound higher as traders concluded that the Bank may now call a halt to interest rate cuts. Sterling rose more than a cent against the dollar to $1.6272. The euro also slid modestly against the pound to 67.32p. Shares endured a directionless day with the FTSE 100 index closing up just 3.8 points at 6,241.5.

Venture help misses target

THE Government yesterday announced plans for a 20 per cent relief of corporation tax to encourage large companies to provide financial help to smaller high-risk ventures (Paul Durman writes). Mr Byers said "corporate venturing has enormous potential for helping small companies on their way" and fostering enterprise, but believes there are few such relationships at present.

However, Glaxo Wellcome, SmithKline Beecham and Zeneca, the pharmaceutical groups, are among Britain's biggest spenders on research and development, and already have relationships, including equity stakes, in many smaller drug development firms.

But the BioIndustry Association was alarmed by the details. An Inland Revenue note suggested that relief should not be available to non-trading firms — seemingly denying help to those that are still developing products before generating their first sales.

Share threat to pensions

PLANS for a new all-employee share scheme could undermine the Government's drive to promote and support company pensions, experts said yesterday (Susan Emmett writes).

Proposals unveiled in the Budget include tax breaks for new share ownership schemes which are far more generous to both employers and employees than those currently available for company pension schemes.

According to Bacon & Woodrow, the actuary, individuals could benefit by as much as 20 per cent after tax by investing in the share scheme rather than the pension. Raj Mody, senior consultant at Bacon & Woodrow, said this incentive may encourage staff to divert funds to the new scheme, undermining company pensions.

As with occupational pensions, employees can contribute to the new share scheme from pre-tax earnings. But unlike pensions, earnings from the share scheme will be taxed according to the length of time that the investment is held.



Piling up: Aggregate Industries, the building materials supplier, has reaped the benefits of strong market conditions to report a 68 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £76.1 million for 1998. Peter Tom, above, the chief executive, said the environment was expected to remain buoyant and Aggregate still had enough financial firepower for further acquisitions. A final dividend of 1.26p was declared, taking the year's payout to 2.1p, up 5 per cent. Aggregate's US businesses, which account for 45 per cent of its revenue, enjoyed volume rises of about 14 per cent in the past year.

Tempus, page 30

Cairn directors' pay cut

BY CARL MORTISHED
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

DIRECTORS of Cairn Energy are taking a pay cut after a disastrous year in which the oil explorer suffered a share price slump and allegations of boardroom extravagance.

Cairn yesterday reported an 87 per cent collapse in operating profits in 1998, to £2.1 million, and said it was making more than half of its 165 staff redundant, as well as closing its Sydney office and writing off £73 million in North Sea assets.

Bill Gammell, chief executive, said directors' pay was to fall £700,000, with his own salary cut by £100,000 to £280,000.

Hamish Grossart, deputy chairman, is to become a non-executive director, reducing his pay from £360,000 to £40,000. The other non-executives have agreed to 10 per cent pay cuts.

Mr Gammell, whose pay almost reached £1 million in 1997, when Cairn shares soared on hopes that Cairn's Bangladeshi gas discoveries would lead to a bonanza, said: "I believe in incentive-type awards. With a low oil price and when you are reducing your staff you should lead from the front."

Mowlem on time for millennium

TRAINS have started to run, on a trial basis, on the new extension of the London's Docklands Light Railway to Lewisham, John Mowlem, the construction company said yesterday (Robert Cole writes).

Mowlem, which is building the link beneath the Thames between Canary Wharf and Greenwich, said: "The first trial trains have begun on schedule, some 30 months after construction began."

When the first stage of the DLR was developed it was dogged by delays. The update on the DLR, due to open before the millennium, came as Mowlem revealed it had returned to the black last year. In 1998 it made taxable profits of £39.4 million.

The final dividend is 3p, against 2.5p last time, making a total for the year of 5p (4p).

Tempus page 30

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.65	2.48
Austria Sch	21.42	19.76
Belgium Fr	63.07	58.11
Canada $	2.592	2.404
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9033	0.8318
Denmark Kr	11.62	10.73
Egypt	5.75	5.14
Finland Mkk	9.38	8.63
France Fr	10.21	9.43
Germany Dm	3.086	2.824
Greece Dr	503	464
Hong Kong $	13.44	12.24
Iceland	129	109
Indonesia	18371	13371
Ireland Pt	1.2234	1.1344
Israel Shk	6.89	6.23
Italy Lira	3049	2812
Japan Yen	210.13	192.60
Malta	0.674	0.615
Netherlds Gld	3.462	3.167
New Zealand $	3.17	2.93
Norway Kr	13.28	12.34
Portugal Esc	310.10	288.07
S Africa Rd	10.66	9.70
Spain Pta	258.46	239.67
Sweden Kr	14.00	12.90
Switzerland Fr	2.527	2.309
Turkey Lira	601112	561157
USA $	1.734	1.591

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Holmes Place jumps 5%

Shares in Holmes Place, the health and fitness club operator, jumped almost 5 per cent yesterday after the group reported a healthy 34 per cent rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £7.25 million.

The group, which doubled its number of clubs to 26 during the year, said demand was showing "no sign of abatement" and it plans ten openings this year, including five in Switzerland.

Turnover was up 44 per cent to £37.2 million, while like-for-like sales in existing clubs rose 17 per cent. Earnings per share reached 8.61p (8.06p) and a final dividend of 2.0p makes a total for the year of 3.5p (3.0p). The results pushed its shares 14p higher to 316½p.

Ladbroke split

Ladbroke Group, which is close to completing a £1.5 billion takeover of Stakis, confirmed yesterday that it will not replace Mike Smith, head of its betting and gaming division, when he leaves to become chief executive of Rank on April 1. Instead, the division has been split into three parts — European betting, UK casinos and international gaming — each of which will report directly to Peter George, Ladbroke's chief executive. Ian Payne, head of Stakis's casinos arm, has been appointed managing director of the enlarged casinos division. Anthony Harris, head of Stakis Hotels, will become managing director of Hilton UK.

European terms

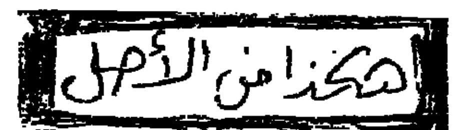
European Leisure, the snooker and nightclubs group, is today expected to unveil the terms of its proposed nil-premium £50 million merger with Allied Leisure, the Burger King restaurants and ten-pin bowling operator. However, Waterfall Holdings, a rival cue sports operator in which European has a 23.9 per cent stake, is also thought to have belatedly expressed an interest in a merger with European.

Ambishus growth

The Ambishus Pub Company has acquired a package of nine pubs from JD Wetherspoon for £4.65 million, taking the AIM-listed operator's total estate to 50. The nine pubs, eight of them within the M25, made a profit of £832,000 in the year to July 1998. Last June Ambishus bought ten pubs from Wetherspoon.

SFA chief moves

Chris Woodburn, aged 51, the chief executive of the Securities and Futures Authority, is to leave his job and take charge of the General Insurance Standards Council next month. The GISC was set up last July to cover anyone who sells general insurance.



Time to think big about mergers

Depoliticising competition policy is a laudable aim. Peter Mandelson in his brief reign at the DTI, was minded to absolve himself from having to give the final word on sensitive commercial issues and Stephen Byers is similarly inclined.

Industry and the City would surely applaud such a move as a step towards bringing more clarity to this cloudy area — but only the first step. That a Secretary of State should be able to veto any merger that has been given the blessing of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission piles an extra layer of unpredictability on top of a process whose outcome is already notoriously difficult to predict.

Companies can pay the best lawyers to weigh up the prospect of a deal being allowed through, take guidance from the Office of Fair Trading and still find that the MMC gives them the thumbs down. It happened to Littlewoods and Freemans, the Sears subsidiary; it happened to Ladbroke and Coral. So confident was Ladbroke that it would win approval for the deal that it made its purchase unconditional. Yet in both cases the MMC said no.

Such aborted trips to the altar are expensive in every way. Not only are there the inevitable professional fees which clock up whether or not success is achieved but there is also the unquantifiable effect on both parties of having so much of their senior executives' time deflected down a dead end.

A more predictable official attitude towards mergers could only benefit corporate efficiency. But while the members of the MMC may be well informed and astute as well as great and good, it is not always clear how they will decide whether or not a deal is in the public interest. Mr Byers's consultation paper on competition policy should take the opportunity to examine this question closely.

Now is a particularly pertinent time to question whether potential monopolies should be judged solely in terms of the national marketplace. In France we have the prospect of a vast banking organisation being concocted by the coming together of three leading houses. The chances of the French authorities ruling out such a deal seem slight. The French admire national champions. Yet the prospect of Barclays merging with NatWest was greeted with howls of derision on the grounds that the competition authorities would not countenance such a deal.

If Britain is to continue playing on the global stage we may have to rethink such ideas.



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Byers on tightrope of competition

Stephen Byers launched his own mini-Budget for business yesterday just as he put retailers on notice that the Government intended a crackdown on pricing.

Some may say that it is hard to act for both causes. But that is not necessarily the case if the weapon used to fight for both is competition. Mr Byers is using the demands of competition to bear down on anti-competitive retailers while trying to raise the competitiveness of small businesses.

That way they will do better business and ultimately provide more competition in the markets in which they operate. The consumer would benefit both ways and business would be encouraged to be sharper rather than be lazy and use sharp practice.

Mr Byers' measures for business are aimed at the smaller companies and start-ups - the area of commerce which is rightly seen as one of the key driving forces of economic growth and competitiveness.

He is giving small businesses a stronger voice, tax breaks for research and development, guarantees that the Government is doing its job on delivering competitiveness assistance — as outlined in the Competitiveness White Paper, and looking at ways to help those who have failed go back into business.

This last move will be made by a review of bankruptcy and insolvency law. Small businesses will also, in time, have their lives made easier by a relaxation of corporate law, allowing them to function with less red tape than their larger counterparts.

There is, of course, the danger that too much relaxation will lead to a rogue's charter. But there is the equal danger that over-regulation can kill nascent businesses before they have had the chance to take their first, potentially successful steps.

Regulation is, however, crucial for large businesses which have a strong grip on a large number of consumers. Step forward the car dealers, supermarkets and drugs companies which are under Office of Fair Trading investigation and have triggered the Government's onslaught on competition policy.

If Mr Byers can pull off these dual acts of being champion of the consumer and champion of business he will be delivering some traditional Labour values in a new Labour pro-business way.

If he is successful on both counts he will have notched up a rare victory, and one that will assure him a longer tenure at the DTI than many of his predecessors.

The right motivation from Scardino

When personnel directors metamorphosed into directors of human resources they may have felt their status was somehow enhanced. But the name change had a subtle subtext that was oh, so Eighties. Employees had become just another asset along with machinery and fleet cars. Human resources could be expanded or downsized depending on market conditions. They could be bought and sold as huge city signing on fees demonstrated, and they could with chilling abruptness be terminated.

When Marjorie Scardino decided that what Pearson needed was not a director of human resources but a director for people, it signalled a very different attitude. The fact that she gave the job to David Bell, who had previously been chief executive of the Financial Times, underlined the seriousness with which she endows the role. People, reasons Mrs Scardino, are the most important asset Pearson has and she intends that they should be well nurtured.

The news that underlying profits at the media group rose by 19 per cent last year indicates that her people are responding as she had hoped. Strong performances in television and text books helped towards the record profits and there should be much more to come as the group reaps the rewards of its Simon & Schuster aquisition last year. The scope for educational publishing to grow, both in the US and Europe, should help Mrs Scardino easily to make her target of double-digit earnings growth. That prospect, however, was not enough to stop the profit-takers pummelling the share price yesterday.

The company shares the Chancellor's view that shareholding staff are motivated staff. Investors have every reason to applaud the attitude. They should also be ready to accept that senior people deserve a slap on the back as well when they produce outstanding results. Mrs Scardino must be in line for a hefty bonus on last year's annual salary of £375,000.

Let there be no carping from those who have ridden the shares in their recent surge but must now accept a less racy rating.

Labour of luvvie

CARLTON'S Michael Green was looking exposed. With Granada, Yorkshire, Tyne-Tees, Anglia and Meridian TV stations all controlled by Labour supporters almost indecently close to Tony Blair, the old Thatcher favourite could expect no favours when he needed them. But with one bound he is suddenly free. By buying Planet 24 and installing Waheed Alli as Carlton head of production, he has a fine working Labour peer to match Lord Hollick and Gerry Robinson. But what about the viewers?

Albright keen on Solutia division

By Paul Durman

ALBRIGHT & WILSON, the chemicals company that looks set to be taken over, is still pursuing plans to acquire the phosphates arm of Solutia, the US chemicals group that was formerly part of Monsanto.

Albright has recommended a £408 million offer from Albemarle Corporation of the US, but Rhodia of France is contemplating making a higher offer.

Paul Rocheleau, Albright's chief executive, said Albemarle had said it would support its strategy. The Solutia business is regarded as an excellent fit with Albright's own phosphates business.

Any rival bidders will have to recognise that Albright, with 30 per cent of its £815 million sales in the UK, is still facing tough trading conditions. Comparable pre-tax profits fell 20 per cent last year to £48.3 million.

The fall was mostly blamed on the strength of sterling and Asian devaluations, which cost £7 million, and reduced exports to Asia Pacific, which cost £6 million. The phosphorus derivatives and acrylics division was worst hit, its profits falling by a third to £15.5 million because of reduced Asian exports and lower sales of flame retardants.

Mr Rocheleau said most of the group has made progress in recent years, but UK profits have fallen from almost £40 million to only £11.6 million since 1995. He said consumer products customers have moved their own production to the Continent to seek easier distribution.

The company intends to maintain its four facilities in the UK, but it will press ahead with the productivity improvements that have led UK staff numbers to fall by 600 to 1,600 over the past four years.

Albright wrote off £1.1 million of due diligence costs incurred on two aborted acquisitions.

Albright's shares were unchanged at 140p. It is paying a final dividend of 4.8p to maintain the full-year payout at 7.15p a share.

Cordiant sets sights on big targets in US

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor

CORDIANT Communications, the international advertising group, says it is planning to make a number of significant acquisitions in the marketing industry, with its sights likely to be set on targets in the United States.

Michael Bungay, chief executive of Cordiant, which demerged from the old Saatchi & Saatchi in 1997, said yesterday he was interested in expanding into everything in the sector from database marketing and sales promotion to design and public relations.

It is likely that the expansion will come in the form of two or three significant acquisitions, either this year or next, with the deals being funded, the company hopes, by a rise in its own share price.

Mr Bungay was speaking as Cordiant announced a 19.9 per cent increase in pre-tax profit in 1998 to £29.9 million at constant exchange rates — the first full year since the demerger.

"We have flourished since demerger. We hit the ground running in 1998 and prospects are looking strong," Mr Bungay said. He added that few commentators gave Cordiant much chance of independent survival at the time of the split.

The share price rose 4½p to 164½p yesterday. This week, the stockbrokers West LB Panmure valued the company at 194p per share.

Operating margins rose to 8.6 per cent compared with a pro forma 7.8 per cent last time and Mr Bungay said the company was on track to reach its target of delivering a 10 per cent margin this year.

Analysts are looking for about £32.5 million pre-tax profit this year.

Net new business gains totalled $580 million last year compared with $250 million in 1997 and Cordiant said the trend had continued in the current year, with $100 million in new business in the first two months of the year.

Cordiant said yesterday it had made progress against three objectives it had set itself: increasing its multinational business from 30 per cent to 33 per cent of group revenues towards a target of 40 per cent by 2000; increasing the North American share of total revenues from 22 per cent to 24 per cent to a 30 per cent target; and increasing diversified services from 20 per cent to 22 per cent, with an inital target of 30 per cent set for 2000.

If the top executives reach a series of tough three-year targets they can turn each share they have subscribed for, in a special incentive scheme, into as many as eight shares.

The proposed dividend of 1.4p a share represents an increase of 16.7 per cent.

ADRIAN SHERRATT

Climbing: Michael Bungay unveiled a 19.9 per cent rise in pre-tax profit to £29.9 million in 1998

Truce at Lonrho Africa

A truce was declared in the war between Lonrho Africa and its largest shareholder, Blakeney Management, yesterday after Lonrho accepted two new directors onto its board.

Richard Wilkinson, a director of Blakeney and the former chief executive of Angel Trains, and Christopher Mills, a director of JO Hambro Capital Management, will become non-executives.

Their appointment follows the resignation of Stephen Walls on Tuesday. Mr Walls, who has run into controversy by working on a bid for Servisair while being a director of the airport services group, resigned because he was too busy with other matters.

House sales upsurge

Falling interest rates have restored confidence in the housing market with transactions up 4 per cent in the first two months of 1999, Countrywide Assurance, the life insurance and estate agency group, yesterday reported. The upsurge in activity compensates for a disappointing 1998 for the company's estate agency division which held back group pre-tax profits to £56.7 million, a rise of 7 per cent. A final dividend of 2.5p, up 0.5p, brings the year total to 3.5p (3p).

Aid for Peugeot

The Government has awarded £2 million to Peugeot, the French carmaker, to aid investment at its plant in Ryton, Coventry, which will create nearly 900 new jobs. Peugeot is adding a third shift at Ryton, which makes the 206 model, in April, at a total cost of £13 million. The aid package is through the European Commission's Regional Selective Assistance scheme and through training support.

Hopes of oil deal

Oil ministers from Opec and other oil-producing countries are gathering in Amsterdam today with the aim of forging a new agreement to cut production and eliminate the vast stockpiles of crude that are depressing oil prices. Hopes of an agreement lifted oil prices to just under $12 yesterday but the market is still awash with crude.

Electra to update valuation

THE battle over the future of the Electra Investment Trust, the £1.2 billion venture capital fund, will be rejoined today with publication from Electra of an updated asset valuation (Robert Cole writes).

Publication of the statistic is likely to spark a row between Electra and 3i, the rival venture capital investment fund that wants to acquire Electra. Analysts reckon that Electra will say it is worth at least 760p a share, well above the 689p share price and well in advance of the 705p a share that 3i said last month its was prepared to pitch a takeover bid.

Bowthorpe plans high-tech spend

By Adam Jones

BOWTHORPE, the electronics group whose products range from wheelchair power packs to "black box" flight recorders, may spend up to £150 million on acquisitions to continue its growth in high-tech markets.

Bowthorpe reported 1998 pre-tax profits of £92.1 million yesterday, up 8 per cent on 1997. Sales rose 9 per cent to £587.6 million.

Nicholas Brookes, chief executive, highlighted the growth in demand for the testing equipment Bowthorpe sells to telecommunications companies such as Motorola and AT&T. Profits in the relevant division rose nearly 50 per cent. The growth offset weakened sales in the Far East.

Bowthorpe has applied to be allowed to offer American Depositary Receipts to US investors. Although the US accounts for 42 per cent of operating profit, only about 2 per cent of the company is owned by American investors.

Diluted earnings per share were 26.62p (26.16p). A final dividend of 8.58p has been declared, making a total of 12.28p, up 9 per cent on 1997. The shares rose from 415p to 422½p.

Tempus, page 30

Bank plan to save F1 eurobond

FINANCIERS at WestLB, the German merchant bank, are trying to put together a deal to rescue the $1.4 billion (£860 million) eurobond being issued by Formula One Administration, Bernie Ecclestone's company which runs the sport (Jason Nissé).

The proposal from WestLB to join Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, the US investment bank, in underwriting the troubled bond issue and then selling it on to a small number of investors is understood to have been put to the board of the bank. WestLB hopes the bond can be issued early next month.

Matalan looks at home insurance

By Fraser Nelson

MATALAN is planning to enter the home insurance market and is looking for a financial services company to help to exploit its database of 3.4 million shoppers.

The retailer, which runs 87 out-of-town discount stores, may also sell car insurance to its regular customers.

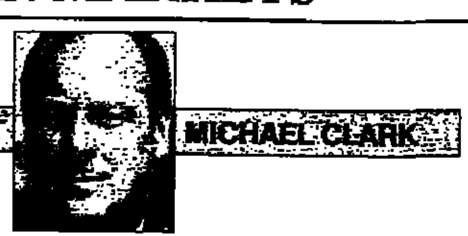
Angus Monro, chief executive of Matalan, said that he had so far turned down approaches from a string of insurers that had sought access to its customer list.

He said: "We've been offered lots of money by lots of people. A database with 3.4 million entries is a very powerful tool, but we will do this in our own time."

Matalan's shares, which floated at 235p last May, jumped 98p to 551p yesterday as it returned pre-tax profits up 79 per cent to £22.7 million for the year to January 2 — well ahead of City expectations. Like-for-like sales were up by 5.9 per cent.

Earnings were 19.4p (11.8p) per share and the maiden dividend is 5.5p a share. This delivers £1.66 million for John Hargreaves, chairman, who still owns 36.1 per cent of the shares.

Tempus, page 30



FTSE edges ahead as the big guns are reshuffled

SIZE does matter in the stock market. The bigger you are, the bigger you get. At least, that is the theory.

Yesterday's quarterly reshuffle of the constituents that make up the top 100 held few surprises. Those companies qualifying for the FTSE 100 index are the biggest in terms of capitalisation. So it was no surprise to see newcomers **South African Breweries**, ¼p lighter at 507p, and valued at almost £4 billion, and **Energis**, 42½p better at £15.97½ (£4.5 billion) achieve FTSE status. They will now be bought by the index-tracker funds who must increase their weighting in the companies.

They will be joined by **Emap**, unchanged at £14.15, for the first time, having seen its price surge from the 800p level since October, and **Misys**, 29p better at 674p.

It will be second time round for Misys which was replaced by Gallaher, down 22p at 392¼p, last quarter. The tobacco company, however has failed to consolidate its position and is dropping out, along with **Safeway**, up 7p at 248½p, **Tomkins**, 7¼p dearer at 213½, and **Williams**, 5¾p higher at 370¼p.

The rest of the equity market wobbled in early trading as investors tried to make sense of the Chancellor's Budget and reflected on the overnight setback for Wall Street. There was an underlying fear that Gordon Brown had scuppered any prospects for another cut in interest rates.

But selling pressure was light and the losses were soon eroded. The FTSE 100 index finished 3.8 up at 6,241.5 as a total of 1.13 billion shares changed hands.

There was a move to quality second-line stocks and this was reflected in the FTSE 250 index, up 33.3 at 5,409.0.

Brokers said demand was centred on industrial stocks that provided value for money or could possibly attract takeover attention. Leading the way was **FKI**, 9p better at 176p in heavy turnover of 9 million shares. A line of three million shares went through at 171p followed by a further 2.5 million at 170p.

Also on the move was **IMI**, 13½p up at 276½p, **Senior Engineering**, 6½p at 149½p, and **Delta**, 1p firmer at 133p.

The surprise bid by Banque Nationale de Paris for rivals Paribas and Société Générale prompted a revival of speculation about consolidation within the UK domestic banking sector. **NatWest** ran up 58p to £14.13, **Abbey National** 62p to £13.26, **Alliance & Leicester** 39p to 838½p, **Barclays** 50p to £18.14 and **Lloyds TSB** 22½p to 940p. Even **Northern Rock** rose 5¼p to 521½p on turnover of 1.26 million shares.

The retailers saw reasons to be cheerful in the wake of the Budget. **House of Fraser** put on 2¼p at 83½p, while **Storehouse** was 1½p better at 132p as HSBC Securities, the broker, upgraded from "reduce" to "hold". **Dixons** advanced another 22½p to £12.90½ buoyed by Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, moving from "reduce" to "hold".

Caradon dropped 4p to 136p after HSBC Securities, the broker, cut its rating from "add" to "hold", having seen the price climb from a low of 88¼p since December. Instead, it prefers the look of **Hepworth**, up 5p at 171½p, for which it has issued a "buy" recommendation ahead of results next week.

William Cathcart, chairman, has sold 600,000 shares in **Avis Europe** at 247p. It reduces his total holding to 225,329, or less than 1 per cent. Avis eased 2p to 246½p.

Independent Insurance continued to build on this week's results and share buying by directors with a rise of 16½p to 296½p. Michael Bright, managing director, bought 190,000 shares on Tuesday, and Daniel Hodson, director, has since picked up a further 20,000 shares at 270p. He now holds 34,930. Goldman Sachs, the US securities house, is bullish on prospects.

Dennis Cope, chairman, has bought 52,000 shares in **Fairview Holdings** at 96p. He now owns 665,923, or ½ per cent. The shares rose 6½p to 100½p.

A return to the black last year at **John Mowlem** was welcomed by the market, which marked the price 8½p higher at 129p. The performance of the construction group, whose chief executive is John Gains, was made all the more palatable by a 25 per cent rise in the payout.

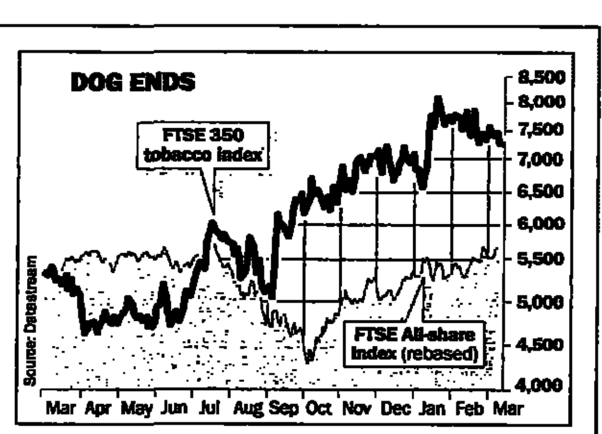
Sports Internet Group was chased 20½p higher to 135½p as word went round that IG Index, the City betting organisation, may be reversed into it. Recent reports have indicated that IG Index is ready to go public, but brokers say a move into an existing public company may be a cheaper way in. IG is also known to have been casting an eye over **Zetters**, the pools and bingo operator, down 1½p at 129½p.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** Short covering enabled bond prices to recoup some of Tuesday's Budget-inspired losses. But the undertone remains cautious. There are fears the Chancellor may be forced to turn to the bond market to implement his £6 billion stimulus package for the economy. In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt rose 56p to £116.19, while among conventional issues Treasury 9 per cent 2008 was 33p higher at £132.77.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Shares traded at stable levels in the late-morning session. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 15.26 at 9,709.02.



John Gains saw Mowlem shares rise after the company returned to the black and lifted its payout by 25 per cent



TOBACCO shares have been left wheezing by the Chancellor's decision to stick 17½p on a packet of 20 cigarettes. Claims that the move has been made on health grounds have fallen on deaf ears, naturally enough, among the smoking fraternity.

But now there are clouds hanging over the tobacco sector and none of them contains nicotine.

BAT Industries fell a further 8p to 549½p in the wake of this week's profits setback and huge provisions. Gallaher retreated 22p to 392¼p as Goldman Sachs, the US securities house, reduced its rating on the shares from "market perform" to "market underperform".

Goldman has also lowered its rating on Imperial Tobacco, down 41p at 677½, from "market outperform" to "market perform".

It is too early to see if the latest revenue increase will be enough to affect the bottom line, but with US litigation worries overhanging, the outlook remains bleak.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	9709.02 (+15.26)
S&P Composite	1278.59 (-1.25)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	15480.00 (+383.30)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	10749.01 (+216.06)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	520.66 (-1.61)

Sydney:

AO	2931.4 (+10.6)

Frankfurt:

DAX	4721.41 (-37.05)

Singapore:

Straits	1469.53 (+29.01)

Brussels:

BEL20	3277.54 (-27.85)

Paris:

CAC-40	4162.31 (+2.51)

Zurich:

SMI Index	7209.4 (-57.8)

London:

FT 30	3806.1 (+30.6)
FTSE 100	6241.5 (+3.8)
FTSE 250	5409.0 (+33.3)
FTSE 350	2963.9 (+4.4)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2853.76 (+56.8)
FTSE All-Share	2865.81 (+4.88)
FTSE Non Financials	2896.96 (-5.02)
FTSE Fixed Interest	153.38 (-0.05)
FTSE Govt Secs	112.74 (+0.24)
Bargains	85711
SEAQ Volume	1141.0m
US$	1.6272 (+0.0123)
Euro	0.6732 (-0.0011)
£:SDR	1.1745
Exchange Index	102.7 (+0.2)

Bank of England official close (4pm)

RPI	163.4 Jan (2.4%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	161.8 Jan (2.6%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Close Bros Dev VCT	100	...	
Enhanced Zero Trust	100½	...	
Gander Properties	7½	...	
Jupiter En Zero Dv Pf	107¼	–	¼
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	99¾	–	¼
Luminar Warrants	277½	...	
NBA Quantum	110	...	
Sports Internet	135½	+	20½
Syngstar	126	–	3

RIGHTS ISSUES

Brancote n/p (10)	1	–	¼
Oxford Biomedica n/p (15)	4	–	½

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Peel	633½	+134½	+ 26.9
ASW	16	+ 2½	+ 18.5
Fuji Bank Y	304	+ 40¼	+ 15.2
Lon Forfaiting	74	+ 9½	+ 14.7
Durban	169½	+ 21¼	+ 14.3
Lambert Howarth	215	+ 25	+ 13.1
AIM	180	+ 20	+ 12.5
Cons Murchison	22½	+ 2½	+ 12.5
Caird Gp	262½	+ 27½	+ 11.7
Heywd Wim	233½	+ 24	+ 11.4
Albion	97½	+ 10	+ 11.4
Peptide Thera	114	+ 9½	+ 9.0
IOC Intl	49½	+ 4	+ 8.7
Tomkinsons	211	+ 17	+ 8.7
Countrywide As	137	+ 11	+ 8.7
Critchley	345	+ 27½	+ 8.6
Yorklyde	57	+ 4½	+ 8.5
Saville Grdn	66½	+ 5	+ 8.1
Terranova	102	+ 7½	+ 7.9
Utd Carriers	27½	+ 2	+ 7.8
Easynet	378½	+ 27½	+ 7.8
Alba	249	+ 18	+ 7.7
Arcadia Group	219½	+ 15½	+ 7.5
Reuters	967½	+ 65	+ 7.2

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Gresham House	21½	– 9	– 29.5
Stallware	232½	– 30	– 11.4
Core Group	35	– 3½	– 9.0
Xenova	79	– 7½	– 8.6
Ryan Hotels I£	55½	– 5	– 8.2
Helphire Gp	715	– 50	– 6.5
SkyePharma	70½	– 4½	– 6.0
Pearson	1337	– 85	– 5.9
Allied Carpets	31½	– 2	– 5.9
Imperial Tob	677½	– 41	– 5.7
Druck	217½	– 12½	– 5.4

TEMPUS

Solid foundations

CRUSHED rock and ready mixed concrete make solid foundations for Aggregate Industries's construction customers, but also for Aggregate's own corporate health. Shares of the group have soared 46 per cent in the past seven months on the back of strong earnings growth and a string of successful acquisitions.

Yesterday's results highlighted the strength of Aggregate's markets in both the US and UK. But the key questions for investors concern the sustainability of the growth — both in terms of the company's profits and its share price.

Aggregate is poised to enjoy more organic growth this year, particularly in the second half, when the benefits of the US Government's six-year, $206 billion road funding package flow through. In the UK, price rises above inflation are anticipated as confidence grows about the health of the housing construction market. It is also fair to expect Aggregate to continue its programme of bolt-on acquisitions, particularly in the highly fragmented US market. But last year's string of purchases has left the balance sheet, with gearing of 45 per cent, unable to support a substantial takeover. It is improbable that last year's merger proposal with Tarmac will be revived.

Profit forecasts for this year were upgraded yesterday. Expectations are that Aggregate will make about £86 million before tax. That puts the shares on a prospective earnings multiple of about 15.5 times, a shade less than rival Hanson. Both are good, well-managed companies but sand and gravel remains a solid, rather than an exciting, business.

Aggregate shares have made their run for the time being. Hold.

Bowthorpe

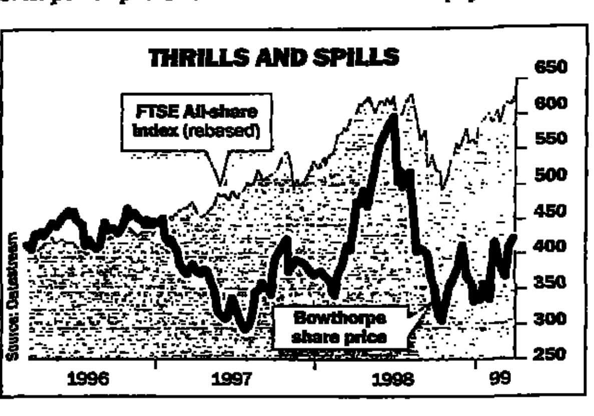
THIS time last year, Nicholas Brooks, the chief executive of Bowthorpe, was extolling the virtues of his company's expansion plans in the Far East. But just as the stock market had bought the management story and chased the shares up to 603p, the Asian chaos hit sentiment and sent the shares tumbling to 306p.

With the Far East region still on its knees Mr Brooks has found a new mantra: telecoms.

But it would be wrong to judge Bowthorpe too cynically. In pursuing Far East markets and telecoms, Bowthorpe may appear to be chasing bandwagons, but in both cases Bowthorpe has done, and is doing, the right thing. It is constantly exploring more technically advanced activities, but while large parts of its operations are in relatively low tech areas, it must chase growth. It is a leading supplier of cable ties — required by the truckload to organise the great mass of cabling unleashed by the computer and communications revolution.

Bowthorpe also makes sensors, cable interconnectors, "black boxes" for aircraft, other flight data systems and even power packs for wheelchairs. Indeed the range of an number of its individual businesses has bewildered investors, and perhaps even itself, in the past.

Mr Brookes has been more unfortunate that unwise. His efforts streamlining the group and imposing tough growth targets — he wants Bowthorpe to quadruple in size — should pay off. Hold.



Matalan

FOR a retailer specialising in cheap clothes, Matalan is an unlikely stock market darling. But its shares jumped 22 per cent yesterday on the back of an excellent set of results, taking the gains since last September's nadir to 163 per cent. The ecstatic reaction owes much to the fact that retail sector *cogniscenti* has heard nothing but misery for the last nine months.

Matalan's skill is in exploiting the budget shopper. Most of Matalan's competitors are on the high street. But Matalan is drawing them, in increasing numbers, to its out-of-town locations. It makes much of the high street misery the past few months and in the current environment, it will probably win market share wherever it opens. But with shares now at 551p they trade on 23 times earnings — a stratospheric rating for a small retailer.

Dixons shares trade on a similar rating, but only by dint of its questionable Internet prowess. Matalan will only keep its place in this super league if it can retain its cutting edge reputation when the likes of Marks & Spencers are back on their feet.

It may. But then again it may not. And even if it does the share price looks toppy. Take profits.

John Mowlem

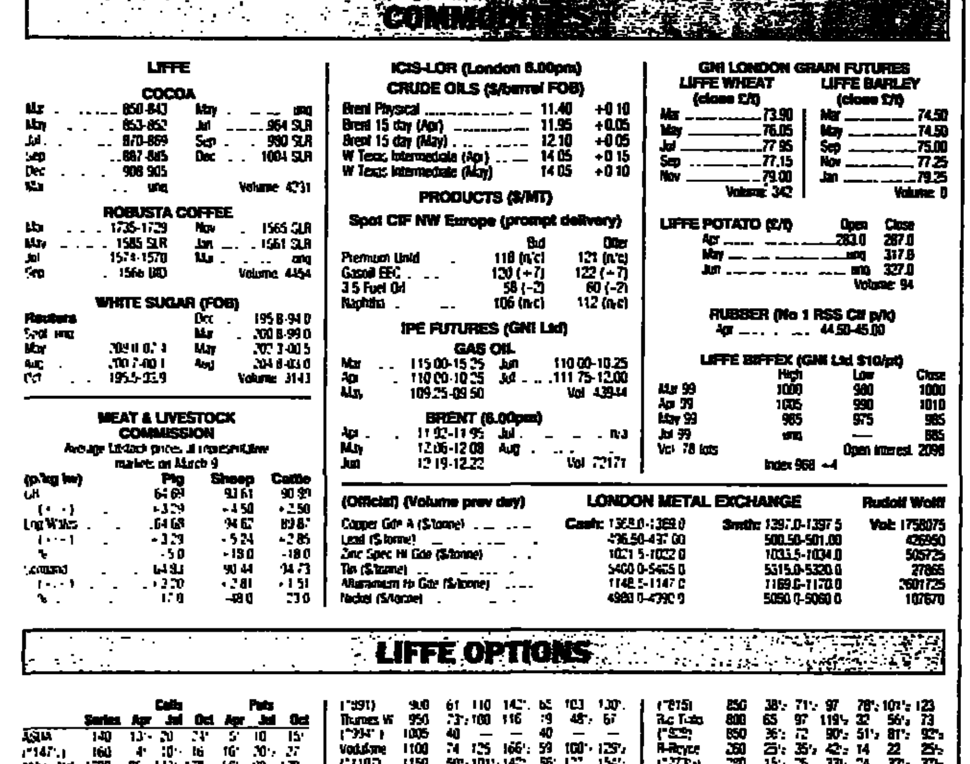
YESTERDAY'S share price reaction to figures from John Mowlem also appeared over the top. The stock rose 7 per cent to 129p despite the fact that profits at one of new value added operations (facilities management) went into reverse. The reaction was also odd, given that the greatest component of its profits came from a business it half sold in 1997: SGB scaffolding.

Mowlem generates most of its turnover from construction, and while the profit margins improved from 0.9 per cent to 1.1 per cent, they remain wafer thin. Perhaps the stock market was encouraged by the movement towards its first target of 2 per cent. But at this rate it will take five years to reach the goal. Moreover, for investors considering the greater scheme of things it is hardly the most awe inspiring goal.

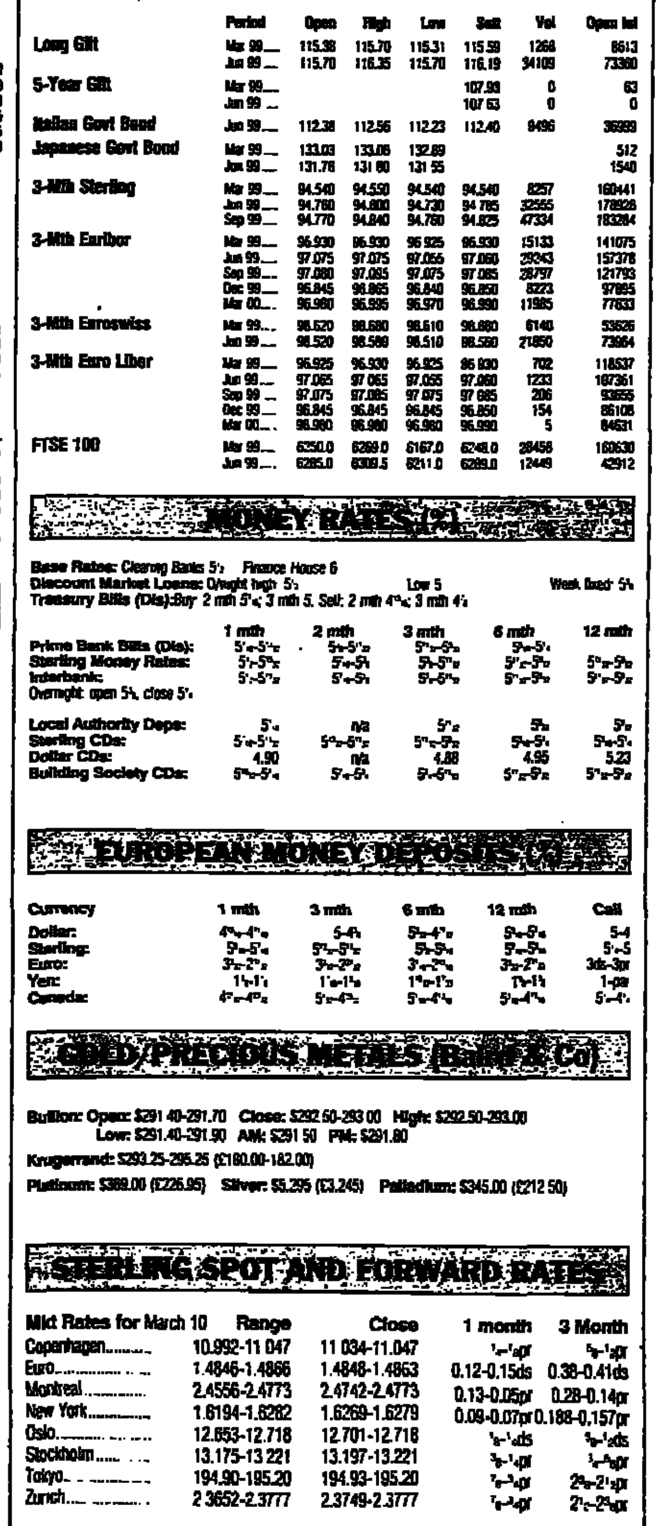
Mowlem's environmental services side, which de-contaminates polluted land among other things, was a bright spot. Its margins are 12 per cent and sales also grew nicely last year. Environmental is another of Mowlem's value added ideas, and it desperately needs them to distract attention from construction. The new operations are also small, together accounting for only 11 per cent of sales and 15 per cent of operating profit.

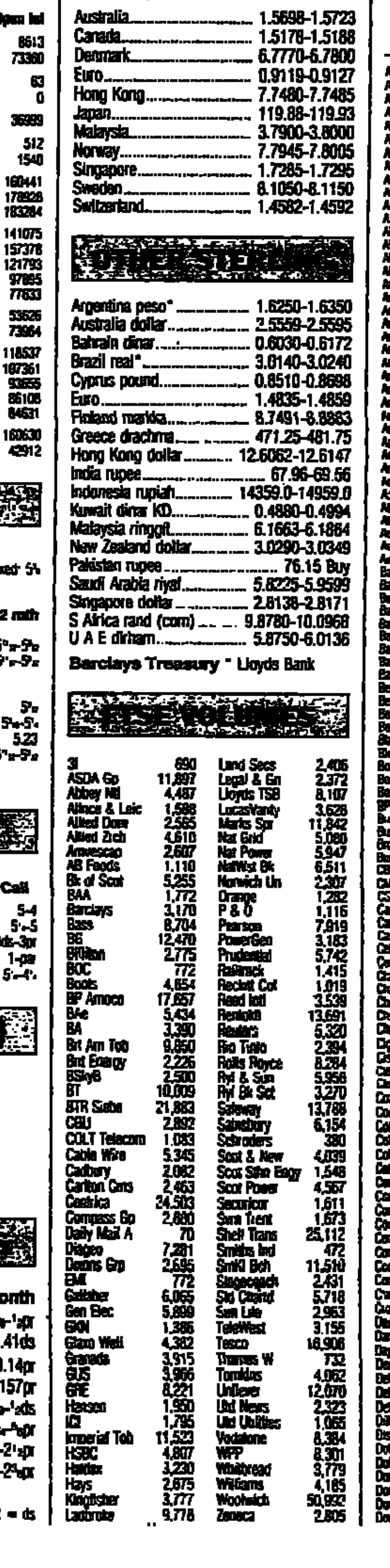
It has some firepower for acquisitions, but decent businesses in this sphere are not cheap. There is no need to chase the shares.

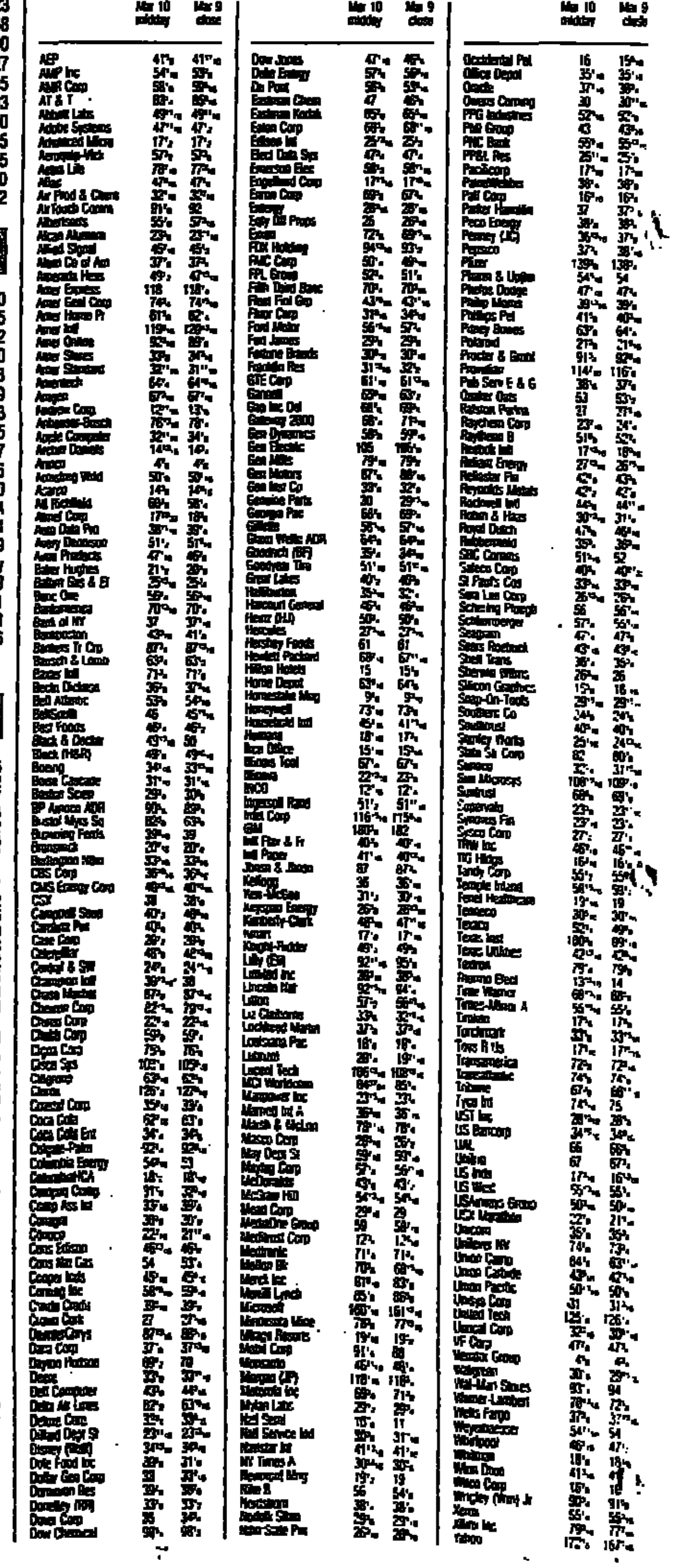
EDITED BY ROBERT COLE



LIFFE OPTIONS







Brown's £3.5 billion millennium bug

Why is it that Gordon Brown arouses all one's deepest distrust and suspicions, even when he appears to be doing the right thing?

Maybe it is that overwhelming arrogance that was on show again on Tuesday. It conveys, with an implied put-down to all comers, that he alone understands the nation's finances; that he is undoubtedly the greatest Chancellor since Gladstone and probably the best ever.

Arrogance may not be attractive but is not unknown among previous Chancellors. Such mastery can even help to build confidence if it is justified, as Mr Brown's appears to be so far. The drawback is that lesser folk tend to pounce delightedly on mistakes, such as the £5 billion a year tax on pensions. As Lord Lawson can testify, your inevitable if unworthy enemies await your downfall with glee.

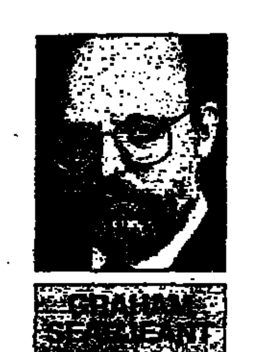
Perhaps it is that puritan self-righteousness. From the utility levy onwards, Mr Brown has always sought to convert the mundane process of raising money from us to fund the public spending we voted for into a Robin Hood crusade. He will stamp out evil by taxing it and distribute the proceeds of social crime among worthy charitable causes. In a phrase beloved of environmental campaigners, he claims to "tax bads to help goods".

We are used to Chancellors being hypocritical over tobacco or drinks duties. These drugs are supposedly taxed to discourage demand but actually because demand is unresponsive to price, allowing huge sums to be raised from sinful volunteers. Mr Brown carries this pretence to absurdity.

The pension tax was labelled as an investment incentive. A £1.5 billion extra impost on petrol is morally matched by a £50 million rise in subsidies for rural buses and the introduction of capital allowances and tax-free mileage allowances for those who use their bicycles for business purposes. Sadly, you would have to keep up an average speed of 27 mph to pedal your way to the minimum wage.

The 1998 Financial Statement and Budget Report was titled *New Ambitions for Britain*. This year's is *Budget 99: Building a Stronger Economic Future for Britain*. Both these dry statistical tomes have glossy covers showing happy smiling children. Inside, abolition of married couples allowance is categorised as "Building a Fairer Society". Imposing extra national insurance contributions on higher-middle earners counts as "Increasing Employment Opportunity".

These affectations are certainly annoying, but the fatal flaw in Mr Brown is more basic. Behind the intellectual mastery and the cloying parade of virtue, he is just another clever confidence trickster. The key to his Budget-making is to allocate different tax and spending measures to differing time periods in such a way that it is hard to pin down know what is actually going on in any one year.



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

This technique is familiar to company auditors as one of the stock methods used by fraudsters to fiddle their books. Much more more commonly, it has long been the prime method used by creative accountants to paint the false impression of steadily rising profits. In the company sector, the Accounting Standards Board has taken almost a decade to stamp out such abuse. In Gordon Brown's Treasury, it is rising to new heights.

Most noticed that the 10p tax rate announced on Tuesday will come in in April, but that the standard rate will come down to 22 per cent only next year. Married couples allowance and mortgage interest relief will not be abolished until April 2000, the new child tax credit will not arrive until April 2001 and the new tax regime for company cars only in April 2002.

Nothing wrong with advance notice, you may think. It helps people to plan ahead sensibly. What it actually does is to drop these measures into a presentational black hole. They are not part of this year's Budget measures. But they are not part of the Millennium year Budget measures or those for 2002 either, because they enact measures announced long ago.

The effect is sensational. While Budget losers and the querulous will always complain, everyone could agree that it cut taxes overall. In that misleading phrase it was a giveaway Budget, albeit responsibly so. Our Chancellor managed to cut taxes yet boost both spending and the current surplus.

There is it in black, white and pink in *Budget 99*. The effect of all the Budget measures add up to a £1.07 billion cut in Exchequer revenue in the year 1999-2000, after indexing taxes and allowances for inflation. The cuts build up to £1.39 billion in 2000-2001 and £3.56 billion in 2001-2002. Or so it seems.

Other tables show the impact of tax changes the Chancellor announced earlier, sometimes years earlier, which not yet come into effect. They include higher fuel duties, previous cuts in allowances and taxing dividends in Peps. Together, These will raise taxes by £3.59 billion in 1999-200, by £4.91 billion in 2000-2001 and by £7.64 billion in 2001-2002.

These are not previous tax measures. They are imposts announced in advance, new taxes. And they are much bigger than the cuts paraded on Tuesday. Overall, Mr Brown's Budget measures will put our taxes up by a net £2.5 billion in the next fiscal year and by £3.5 billion in the Millennium year. In 2001-2002, taxes would rise by £4.1 billion, except that the Chancellor could announce three more sets of measures before then.

Fair enough if the Government was honest about it. But it prefers creative accounting to make it appear that taxes are falling.

The last Budget of the Millennium was made by the last great con-man of the Millennium. Mr Brown himself is Britain's most costly Millennium bug.

Marks & Spencer readies itself for a marketing revolution

A huge change of culture is in store at M&S, says Sarah Cunningham



James Benfield is the man charged by Marks & Spencer with transmitting his passion for the product to the public

James Benfield faces a mammoth task. After 28 years with the business, he has just been made UK marketing director of Marks & Spencer at probably the most difficult juncture in its history. Throughout his career at M&S, it has been not just a tremendously successful company, but a national institution on a par in the public's affection with the BBC. But now the business is struggling to deal with the aftermath of a disastrous fall in sales and a spectacular boardroom bust-up.

To make his task even harder, Benfield has to deal with the fact that the group has not traditionally bothered a great deal about marketing. It has relied on its loyal customer base, its reputation and its stores. Who needs fancy adverts? The public was so used to the idea that M&S did not need to advertise that when TV ads appeared at Christmas in an effort to clear unsold stock, they made newspaper headlines.

The "we don't need to advertise" attitude, which Benfield puts down to modesty — and others interpreted as arrogance — has already changed. As Benfield said: "In a world in which there is a cacophony of sound, whispering about what we do is not enough. Unless we start getting our message across, we deserve what happens to us."

The first issue that Benfield, who is also responsible for UK operations, is addressing is merchandising within stores: improving layout, the ways that goods are presented on the rails, labelling and pricing. The second issue will be advertising to the world outside the stores.

M&S is currently headhunting some media hotshots, probably at the level just below Benfield. It is also possible, though, that someone will be recruited at director level.

"We're looking for someone with experience of taking on a well-known brand and reinvigorating it. Someone who may have worked in the ad world, and in new media. We may need more than one person," he said.

All types of advertising are up for consideration, from television to the Internet, and the first results of the new thinking should be seen in the near future. The message will be that M&S has more to offer than people think. Talking to customers has already established that "we have many product groups in which people don't know we do things", Benfield said. "Marks & Spencer should be able to surprise you."

Recent internal research by the company showed that only 5 per cent of customers leaving one of its largest stores, at Lakeside shopping centre in Essex, realised that it sold furniture.

The sort of changes that Benfield sees being introduced will be expensive, and so spending on marketing will rise, though he will not say by how much.

The company's new mantra of "everything is under review" includes the current advertising agency, BMP. The chance to think up a whole new advertising approach for M&S is doubtless one that will be hotly pursued by the main agencies.

Tellingly, in all his years with the group, including the past six as a board member, Benfield has not done a press interview. Talking to the media was left almost entirely to Sir Richard Greenbury, who was chairman and chief executive until his deputy, Keith Oates, made a bid for his job. Sir Richard was moved upstairs to be non-executive chairman. Peter Salsbury, the new chief executive, has, like Benfield, worked at M&S his whole career, getting to know each department. Mr Oates was persuaded to take early retirement.

Until a few weeks ago, Salsbury had as little media exposure as Benfield. Under the new regime, the company wants to be open, but is also clearly scared of saying too much before things have been settled. One area that Benfield does not want to discuss is the brand strategy. All he will say is that "we're looking at all of it".

Walking around the flagship Marble Arch store with Benfield yesterday, it was clear that — as an M&S man to the core — his passion is for product. He talks with unbounded enthusiasm about different high-tech yarns and their properties. He is immensely proud of the fact that, in the early Eighties, he introduced the world to M&S Duck a l'Orange.

In fact, Benfield, who is 49 and lives in Highgate in North London with his wife, a former teacher, began his career in M&S's food department. There was a period of his life when he was getting up in the middle of the night to head off to New Covent Garden to buy vegetables, and he recalls once receiving the unnerving command from Derek Rayner (now Lord Rayner), a former chairman: "Sort out Israeli produce."

The enthusiasm for developing exciting new products was one of the things that, in retrospect, got M&S into trouble. The process of getting high-tech fabrics to market is expensive and meant that prices rose. They have now been cut, by about 3 per cent overall, with one third of all products affected. "Some whole departments have had all their prices cut by 8 to 10 per cent," Benfield said. M&S jeans, for example, now sell at £20 rather than £23.

Getting prices down is no easy task, and can be done only by cutting the amount that M&S pays suppliers. That, in turn, means suppliers have had to move more of their production to countries where labour costs are much lower. "We've really agonised over the 'Made in Britain' thing," Benfield said. "It has been very tortuous."

While more than 90 per cent of Marks & Spencer goods were once made in Britain, the balance is now about 65 per cent UK, 35 per cent overseas. "I don't think it'll be that long before we end up at an even split," Benfield said, "but we have to keep a proper balance between the UK and offshore." The UK production side is essential to keep the stores stocked with some bestselling lines. He admits that, because stores were so overstocked at the end of last year after the company had badly miscalculated demand, far less has been ordered for the spring, and suppliers say that, so far, less has been ordered for autumn and winter. One result is that "we're going to be short of the fastest sellers this spring," Benfield said. "We're chasing goods."

Any solid revival in trading at Marks & Spencer is some way off, therefore. Sales cannot really pick up if the goods are not there to sell. As far as analysts are concerned, the risk is that M&S will go the way of Sainsbury's, which, though still very profitable, has failed to get back on to its front foot after losing its place as Britain's leading supermarket to Tesco.

There is clearly no lack of effort at M&S though, and there is a refreshing willingness to admit that mistakes were made. The activity at the "customer end" of the business is being matched by upheavals at the Baker Street headquarters.

So far, 31 senior jobs have been cut, including three director positions. More job cuts at head office, possibly running into the hundreds, are expected to be announced in the next few weeks. Jobs are likely to go in areas where there is overlap between M&S and its suppliers. "We want to get away from so much man-to-man marking between ourselves and our suppliers," Benfield said. "There is more that we can let suppliers do."

The strategy that is being adopted by M&S is being put into effect more quickly than some outsiders predicted. But the changes bring risks. To pay for the price cuts, the company not only has to get better deals with its suppliers, but also has to improve sales dramatically in the coming months.

Bringing in outsiders on marketing will also come as a shock to M&S. The reshuffle of senior management so far has been just that: no one new has yet been brought in. In fact, the last senior appointment of an outsider came when Mr Oates and Robert Colvill, the finance director, joined 15 years ago.

Just as Benfield was once told to sort out Israeli produce, and got on with it, so he is now determined to sort out UK marketing. As for his record of success, if he had not sorted out Israeli produce he would not have this mammoth task today.

Car industry puts brakes on merger mania

The merry-go-round of mergers in the global car industry ground to a halt yesterday when DaimlerChrysler backed away from taking a stake in Nissan, the troubled Japanese group.

The German-American carmaker said that it had enough on its plate integrating the businesses of Daimler-Benz and Chrysler, merged last year. Other observers might point to the mountain of debt that Daimler would have had to take on — at least £12.5 billion at the last count.

Nissan will continue talks with Renault, however, and few doubt that the next great upheaval in the industry is far away. The Geneva motor show, always a whirl of deal-making rumour, has been even more charged than usual this week.

Joachim Milberg, the new chief executive of BMW, on Tuesday rebutted suggestions that the Bavarian group, which is still controlled by one family, is ripe for takeover.

BMW has undoubtedly been weakened by the increasing losses at Rover, its British subsidiary, which have already claimed the scalp of Bernd Pischetsrieder, the last chief executive, who was perhaps a little too willing to adopt a hands-off approach in deference to British sensibilities.

However, Dr Milberg emphasised the importance of Rover to BMW's survival. The future has room only for truly global players, with a presence across a wide range of models to keep costs down. There could be room for smaller niche players, but not specialists of medium size.

Volvo realised this and sold its car arm to Ford, which had been bidding against Fiat of Italy, for about £4 billion. BMW insists it is big enough to remain independent but it needs Rover to be its mass manufacturer, and also to fill out its range into "sport utility" vehicles through the successful Land Rover and Range Rover derivatives.

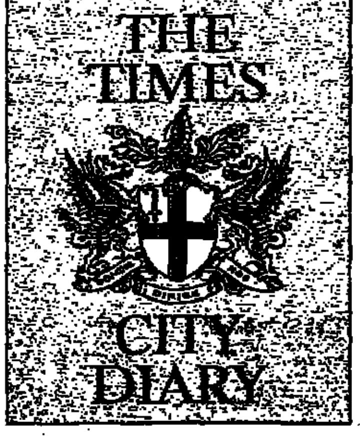
Nevertheless, there are still rumours that Volkswagen wants to gobble up BMW. Given the way VW was humiliated in the Rolls-Royce Motor Cars auction — when BMW managed to undo a seemingly "done deal" and steal away the Rolls brand, it would be a sweet revenge for Ferdinand Piech, the VW head. BMW does not start producing Rolls-Royces for a few years yet. When it does, could it be as a VW subsidiary?

However, the "big is better" mantra is not uniform across the industry. Porsche provides one of the few dissenting views. Wendelin Wiedeking, the Porsche boss, believes costs can be shared without full mergers and he points to an agreement to develop cars with VW as proof.

One of the things that militates against this is the size of egos involved in the business. The DaimlerChrysler deal was remarkable for the way Robert Eaton, the Chrysler boss, appeared willing to let Jürgen Schrempp of Daimler take the lead, although there have been some high-profile defections from the old Chrysler boardroom after the merger. The Schrempps and Piechs of this world may prove to be too big for just one company.

ADAM JONES

On-off switch



MARJORIE SCARDINO is already thinking the unthinkable — that she might lose her much-loved colleague Greg Dyke, chairman of Pearson Television, to the less well-paid job of Director-General at the BBC.

She was asked about the possible loss of such a talent yesterday and said she would be saddened to lose Greg, but there were still a lot of good people in Pearson TV.

"That presumes that I will apply for the job and accept it if offered," piped up Dyke, who had been uncharacteristically coy until then.

He might like to note that the bookies are already making him clear favourite, even before the advertisements for the job are published next week. I doubt the fact has been lost on Scardino.

JAMES BLAZEBY, a managing director of Reed Business Information, has filled in one of those wincingly off-the-wall personal quizzes for the in-house magazine — "what are you like when drunk?" and so on. Asked about phobias, he answers simply "Europeans".

Reed is owned by Reed Elsevier, which is rightly proud of its Anglo-Dutch ownership. I ring Blazeby to ask whether this phobia might serve as a block to further promotion. He is strangely reticent, but someone suggests nervously that the remarks might have been "tongue in cheek".

Reed Elsevier is currently without a chief executive, but the signs point to Jonathan Holcombe, from Simon & Schuster. Blazeby had better hope so, because Holcombe is an American.



"At last Bob Geldof will be able to afford new clothes and a shave"

Count the cost

I DON'T know if you knew this, but it is a disciplinary offence for accountants to be rude. In the course of their duties, anyway. I have this from a hearing of the disciplinary committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which has fined Adrian Thompson for behaving "in a grossly discourteous and offensive manner" towards another accountant.

This tangled story has to do with a row between Thompson and a former colleague chasing him for some records. Thompson wrote various rude letters back — obscenities scrawled in the margin, and at one point he asked if his correspondent's middle name was "git". He was fined £3,000 with £1,800 costs.

I ring to check that being rude is unprofessional. "Accountants are deemed to be representing the profession when they are working," the ICA says. "He has let the Institute down."

Fool's gold

MY THANKS to Saga Holidays for including me on their mailing list. "A world of difference to your holiday." Indeed. I am not quite ready yet, but given the amount of misdirected junk mail we all have to suffer, it seems a good idea to find out just how Saga, which claims to be the ultimate niche market operator, draws up its lists.

As usual, it is the dreaded outside consultant who gets the blame. The company pays a specialist firm for a load of junk but is under no obligation to check it. This particular list is known as the Golden Oldies. Again, thanks.

SPEAKING of advice for the elderly, John Battersby, personal financial services partner at KPMG, has been poring over the small print in the Budget on the abolition of the married couple's allowance. He has found a loophole that will ensure the payment is still forthcoming.

All you do is wait until the allowance is phased out next April and then marry someone who was born before 5 April 1935. "Men and women of that vintage will become a much more marketable commodity," Battersby says.

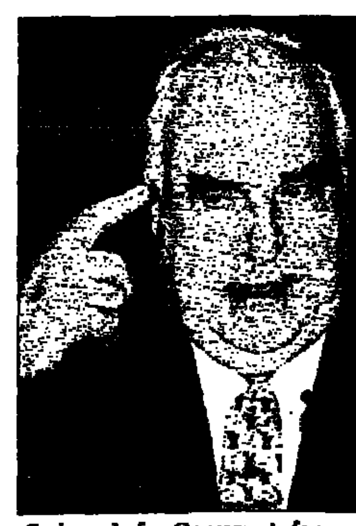
Kohl hole

HELMUT KOHL, the heavyweight former Chancellor of Germany who was thrown out of office last autumn, has been appointed to the international advisory board of Crédit Suisse. It seems that the British practice of finding a hole for superannuated politicos is well known on the Continent, too, even if the hole in this case must have been a pretty sizeable one.

I wonder how the news, in a low-key announcement from the Swiss bank, has gone down at CSFB, Crédit Suisse's investment bank at Canary Wharf. "I don't think the earth is shaking," says one insider there. So Kohl hasn't dropped by yet.

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk



Swiss role for Germany's former heavyweight Chancellor Kohl

Charges at BICC see loss deepen to £94m

By Paul Armstrong

HUGE exceptional charges and tough market conditions have left BICC Group, the engineering and manufacturing company, with a £94 million pre-tax loss for 1998. This compares with a £30 million loss in 1997.

Earnings before exceptional items fell to £70 million from £110 million, mainly because of a sharp downturn in the company's cable operations.

BICC was forced to book exceptional charges of £164 million — £106 million of which related to a writedown in the carrying value of its energy cables business.

The writedown, which BICC said stemmed from new accounting standards, surprised the market and somewhat overshadowed the company's efforts to convince investors that it was recovering.

The exceptional items also included a £25 million charge associated with the loss of 500 jobs in the cables division and a £26 million write-off of historical goodwill after the sale of two businesses.

BICC's cables business saw its operating profit sliced to £19 million from £74 million on the back of poor markets for optical fibre and telecommunications cables. BICC has since sold its interests in these businesses. Alan Jones, chief executive, said he expected the remaining cables division to make a profit this year.

Balfour Beatty, the company's civil engineering arm, reported a 30 per cent rise in operating profit to £69 million after trebling profit margins in the past two years.

Mr Jones said that Balfour's earnings would increase again this year, although he questioned whether such growth could be repeated. He said that Balfour's order book had grown to a record £2.7 billion from £2 billion a year ago.

A final dividend of 2p was declared, making 6p for the year (8p).

Michael Blogg, an analyst with Charterhouse Securities, said that BICC had succeeded in selling its troublesome businesses and was poised for recovery.

He said that the group's ability to generate cash would improve significantly while the sharply lower debt load reduced its risk profile.



Well-heeled: About 86 per cent of shoes sold on the high street are imported, according to John Church, above, chairman of Church & Co, the footwear retailer. The company, however, managed to hold its own in 1998, reporting a £2,000 rise in pre-tax profits to £5.8 million and a 1p rise in the total dividend to 18p per share.

However, Mr Church cautioned: "Although retail sales in January in the UK were satisfactory, there are some signs of a lack of consumer confidence."

Third bid for Wace in four months

By Fraser Nelson

WACE GROUP, the previously unloved printing and imaging company, has received its third takeover offer in four months.

Applied Graphics Technologies (AGT), an American imaging company that competes with Wace in New York, has tabled an unsolicited £57 million cash bid.

This trumps the £55.4 million agreed offer for Wace made in January by Schawk, its US rival. It is well in excess of the £41.7 million hostile bid tabled in December by Photobition, the Anglo-American imaging company.

Fred Drasner, chairman of AGT, said he had considered making a bid for Wace after Photobition made its approach on December 21.

He said: "Trevor Grice [the former chief executive of Wace] was once thinking about selling the US operations and we were talking to him then.

"When Photobition made its offer, we started looking at Wace straight away." He said AGT could raise its offer if Schawk returned with a higher price. Wace shares added 1p to 75½p yesterday — well clear of AGT's 72p-a-share bid.

AGT stopped Schawk buying more than 6.4 per cent of Wace by declaring its intention to bid two weeks ago. Shares of Wace have since traded above Schawk's 70p-a-share cash offer. Under takeover rules, Schawk cannot buy shares above the offer price. Wace made no comment yesterday.

Abbot confident despite depressed oil prices

By Carl Mortished

ABBOT GROUP, the oil services company that last month called off merger talks with ProSafe, a Norwegian rival, predicted yesterday that the depressed oil price would create acquisition opportunities.

Alasdair Locke, chairman, said that the ProSafe talks were called off when he became aware that the Norwegian company's contracted business was not as large as anticipated. However, he said there would be opportunities for further deals. "We can buy the production drilling business of other companies or in particular areas."

Abbot, which owns KCA Drilling, raised its final pre-tax profit by 11 per cent to £16.9 million and reported high levels of activity in its North Sea drilling operations. Mr Locke said that the difficult market would create business for KCA as oil companies trimmed costs by outsourcing more of their platform operations. "These markets give us the opportunity to provide more services."

Abbot is also seeking to expand in the Caspian as well as in Iran, where the company is tendering for the redevelopment of Iran's oilfields.

Abbot announced a final dividend of 2p, lifting the total to 3p, an increase of 15 per cent.

Peel shares soar as it confirms plan to delist

By Matthew Barbour

SHARES of Peel Holdings, the property group that owns the UK's biggest out-of-town shopping centre, rose 24 per cent yesterday after the board confirmed plans to take the company private.

John Whittaker, chairman, is thought to be disappointed with the low rating put on Peel's shares by the City since it opened its £600 million Trafford Centre in Manchester last September. Over the past year the group's shares have underperformed the FTSE All-share index by 30.1 per cent. Since hitting a high of 720p last June, shares fell to a low last month of 480p.

Confidence was hit in December after Mr Whittaker gave warning that the economic climate would undermine the Trafford Centre's performance in the short term.

At Tuesday's close, the shares stood at 499p, a 43 per cent discount to net assets based on 1999 forecasts from its broker, Warburg Dillon Read, of 875p a share. The shares yesterday rose 134½p to 633½p, boosting its market value to £475 million.

In a statement, Peel said its plans were "at a very early stage and that the level of any offers that may be made has not yet been determined".

Microsoft considers settlement

From Andrew Butcher in New York

MICROSOFT is considering a settlement in its bruising antitrust trial, but is believed to be already studying an appeal should it lose the case.

Speculation has grown on Wall Street that Microsoft is ready to settle after a tentative settlement in a legal wrangle between Federal Trade Commission officials and Intel, the world's leading computer chip maker, on Monday.

The settlement enabled Intel to avoid a publicity disaster from irked customers airing their grievances against the chipmaker in a drawn-out court case. Microsoft, by contrast, has been hammered in court and in the media over allegations of corporate bullying that have emerged in evidence at its Washington trial.

The world's biggest software company has not ruled out a settlement with the US Justice Department, but its unwavering denials of wrongdoing have led many observers to believe that it would continue to defend itself to the end.

Pentland overhaul complete

By Fraser Nelson

PENTLAND said yesterday that the overhaul of its businesses is now complete, leaving a £38.8 million bill for restructuring charges.

The leisurewear company said it has now largely pulled out of the US, ended sponsorship deals with seven football clubs and pulled out of selling replica football strips.

In addition to spending £9 million on computers to make it Year 2000 compliant, Pentland was left nursing a £3.5 million loss for 1998, against a £41.6 million profit last time.

Andrew Rubin, who took over as chief executive from his father, Stephen Rubin, a year ago, said: "We've taken the necessary cost out of the business so we can build the Speedo and Ellesse brands. We don't expect any more restructuring charges."

Underlying profits were £32.8 million (£38.5 million). The dividend rises 5 per cent to 3.86p with a final 2.32p. This will mean a £7.45 million payout for Mr Rubin Sr, executive chairman, who owns 56.4 per cent of the shares.

Stansted passengers reach record level

MORE than seven million passengers used Stansted airport in the year to February, a record that helped BAA, the airports operator, to report a monthly increase in passenger traffic of 7.8 per cent. Stansted traffic grew by 50.5 per cent month on month, a record, taking the total for the past 12 months to 7.1 million.

The Essex airport helped the other two London airports — Heathrow and Gatwick — to an aggregate 8.3 per cent growth in February over January, and 7.1 per cent growth for the year. In total BAA saw 7.5 million passengers go through its seven airports during the month. While Edinburgh and Glasgow both reported good growth, the smaller Aberdeen airport saw a decline of 9.2 per cent because of bad weather during the month. Southampton recorded a rise of 31 per cent.

AMEC in sale talks

AMEC, the civil engineering group, has said it is in talks to sell its Fairclough Homes subsidiary to Centex International Homes, the housebuilder based in Dallas, Texas. AMEC has said that it wants to focus on capital projects and Fairclough was put up for sale in the autumn by the company, which said then that performance in the division needed to improve. Fairclough makes about £15 million of profits. AMEC said that discussions were still at an early stage and subject to due diligence investigation by Centex.

TI's £20m acquisition

TI GROUP — the engineering group in which KKR, the US investor, recently took a 5 per cent stake — yesterday moved further into the automotive in-vehicle air-conditioning components business with the £20 million cash acquisition of Kenmore Italiana from Lai Beng Holdings. Kenmore Italiana, which supplies primarily into the European market, is to be integrated into TI's Bundy subsidiary. The company said that after £1 million of integration costs the new business would be earnings enhancing.

Fisher sells Dutch arm

ALBERT FISHER GROUP, the food company, has sold Fisher Quality Foods Uyttewaal to Carl Kühne KG for 14.5 million guilders (£4.4 million) in cash. The proceeds of the sale, part of its planned programme of disposals, will be used to reduce debt, in line with strategy. Uyttewaal, based in Ter Aar in The Netherlands, processes pickle products for sale primarily on the Dutch market. For the year to August 31, 1998, the company reported pre-tax profit of 700,000 guilders and had net assets of 29.3 million guilders before intra-group loans.

IAWS earnings rise

EARNINGS at IAWS, the European foods and fertilisers group based in Dublin, advanced 35 per cent in the first half. The company said that it benefited from focusing on its core businesses of agribusiness and its brands, including Cuisine de France and Shamrock Foods. Reporting in euros, IAWS said that for the six months to January 31 pre-tax profits came in at €12.9 million (£8.8 million) against €9.6 million previously on sales of €385 million. The interim dividend rises from 2.138 cents to 2.459 cents. Earnings per share were 8.26 cents (6.11 cents).

T&B gives warning

TIBBETT & BRITTEN, the logistics group, said that it was having to address "unacceptable" operating losses in its South African operations, which were hurt by a worsening economic and social environment, and gave warning that there were uncertainties as to its UK businesses because of the retail situation. T&B reported pre-tax profit for 1998 of £28 million (£28.2 million) on turnover up 23 per cent at £1.13 billion. The final dividend is up to 14.1p per share (13p), making a total of 20p (18.5p) for the year.

Heywood advances

HEYWOOD WILLIAMS, the building materials company, yesterday saw its share price jump 24p to 233½p after it reported improved results. Pre-tax profit increased to £63 million, for 1998, from £43.7 million last time. Turnover was up 9 per cent at £690 million. Earnings per share rose 16.5 per cent to 29.6p and the final dividend of 9.25p (8.8p) makes a full-year payout of 14.25p (13.8p). Heywood said that although weakness in the UK market persists, it expects falling interest rates to boost demand this year. It said US markets remain firm.

Rage returns to black

RAGE SOFTWARE, the computer games company, yesterday reported pre-tax profits of £610,000 for the six months to December 31, compared with a loss of £350,000 last time. Rage also said that it had reached agreements with Compaq, Dell and Acer for a cut-down version of its Expendable game, to be bundled with their Pentium III machines. It said that it expects to make a profit of £3.1 million for the full year. Turnover rose to £3.1 million (£900,000) and earnings per share were 0.18p, compared with a loss of 0.14p. There is no dividend.

Terranova Foods dips

TERRANOVA FOODS, the demerged chilled foods part of Hillsdown Holdings, marked its first results as an independent company with a fall in profit. It blamed the troubled poultry market. Operating profits for the year to December 31 fell to £25.3 million (£27.3 million), although the pre-tax profit — benefiting from one-off gains coming from the demerger — actually rose to £36.5 million from £26.3 million. The shares rose 7½p to 102p yesterday, above their low of 75p but still below the 140p demerger price. The maiden final dividend is 2.8p.

Audit is question of public interest

Ian Plaistowe says individuals from outside the profession are essential to procedures

Increasing interest is now being placed on International Standards on Auditing. Last autumn the World Bank criticised the quality of some audits by firms in the Far East. Around that time, the chairman of the SEC, Arthur Levitt, attacked the quality of financial reports issued by US companies and audited by US firms. In Europe, the European Commission has been increasing the attention it pays to auditing standards; last year it formed a Committee on Auditing and the subjects it has been considering have included the comparability of auditing standards within Europe and the ways in which greater consistency could be achieved. Later this year it will be considering auditor independence. In the US, an Independence Standards Board has been formed to provide greater assurance of the independence of auditors.

This increased focus on auditing standards will place great pressure on the International Auditing Practices Committee (IAPC), which forms part of the International Federation of Accountants. Hitherto, IAPC has been woefully short of resources with only a part-time chairman, no full-time director and only one or two staff. It has been agreed that it should be provided with additional resources and a review of its future strategy is under way. However, there are several important questions that still need to be considered as part of the strategy review:

☐ Who should own the audit standard setting body? Should it continue to be the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), a body that comprises accounting bodies from around the world, or should it be owned by an independent organisation that would include individuals independent of the accounting profession. The International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) is proposing a new structure under which it would be owned by an independent foundation and some would argue that such a structure would enhance the credibility of IAPC.

☐ Who should sit on IAPC? Should it be, as at present, solely practitioners or should it be some combination of practitioners and non-practitioners?

☐ Should meetings of IAPC be open to regulators or the public?

☐ What should be the relationship between IAPC and the Ethics Forum of IFAC which sets auditing standards? Should IAPC take on the responsibility for setting ethical standards applicable to auditors? At present IAPC has no such responsibility but there is substantial overlap between auditing and ethical standards.

☐ How should the application of Auditing Standards by practising firms be monitored? Should the monitoring be performed by IAPC or some other body? At present, most Western countries have their own mechanisms for checking that auditors are applying Auditing Standards but many of the less-developed countries do not. Where countries do have mechanisms, the methods they use vary substantially. Should there be a requirement that each country check the compliance of its auditing firms with Auditing Standards? Should there be some co-ordination between these bodies to ensure a consistent approach?

☐ And how do we ensure that the way in which Auditing Standards are applied is consistent around the world?

Many of these questions relate to the question of the public interest. Who has an interest in the results of audits? Is it just the shareholders? What about tax authorities, employees and creditors? So there is a substantial public interest and this needs to be recognised in the way in which Auditing Standards are set — by the involvement of some non-auditors. The profession must respond to these issues, and demonstrate it pays due regard to the public interest and to the concerns of its critics. If not, we shall see increased pressure from government and regulatory agencies to set the mechanisms for us. Let's ensure that we can rise to the challenge.

Ian Plaistowe is a partner at Arthur Andersen and chairman of the Auditing Practices Board



Ian Plaistowe says the profession must respond to audit issues or face outside pressure

Street life is a real drag

FORTHCOMING strikes on the Tube will be as nothing compared with the congestion forecast for Central London on April 1. Embankment Place, outside the PricewaterhouseCoopers headquarters, is expected to be blocked completely. It is all to do with the dreaded process of harmonisation after last year's merger of Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand. PW was a non-smoking office. Coopers was not. Coopers has lost the struggle. On April 1, it becomes a no-smoking zone. Anyone seeking free financial advice should tug at the sleeves of the dozens of partners who will be standing outside with their life-enhancing gaspers.

It's a takeover

LAST YEAR'S summer dinner of the corporate finance faculty of the English ICA was notable for a speech by Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale, chairman of Great Universal Stores. He took the opportunity to tell the world just what he thought of the Takeover Panel and those who ran it. The unfortunate point was that Alistair Defriez, the panel's director-general, was sitting four along on the top table. Now, all is changed. Defriez stood down from the panel last Friday and went back to Warburgs. He gets his chance to redress the balance on May 13. He is the guest speaker at this year's faculty dinner. Book now for the fun.

Drawing attention

MERGING two mid-tier accounting firms is always a hard concept to get across, and an announcement this week that the esteemed and elderly firms of Pannell Kerr Forster and Robson Rhodes are to join forces on May 1 was no exception.

Given that Grant Thornton has picked off 10 per cent of Robson Rhodes partners in recent months, there is always an underlying agenda of two firms trying to save each other from their mistakes through a merger. Announcing the merger in what used to be Disraeli's Cabinet room at the Reform Club probably didn't help.

The merger idea may have emerged over a drink at the Reform, but the club's collection of political cartoons undermined it. As the partners spelt out their vision to the press, eyes tended to wander.

One eye-catching cartoon behind the new managing partner's head was entitled *Extremes Meet in a Radical Embrace*. Definitely not what accounting mergers are about.

ROBERT BRUCE

Tweedie facing terrier attack

THE great wrangle is under way again. The Accounting Standards Board today publishes its latest draft Statement of Principles. And as sure as accounting night follows day, Ron Paterson, that terrier of a technical partner at Ernst & Young, is ready and waiting. At the first sight of the document, his teeth will be buried into the trouser leg of Sir David Tweedie, the ASB chairman. Tweedie argues that the attacks are irrelevant. Paterson argues that the fundamentals of financial reporting are being weakened.

The story goes a long way back. Accounting standard setters have long argued that their life would be a lot easier if some kind of what used to be called a conceptual framework could be devised.

This would lay down the fundamentals, and all future standards could be drawn from that. If nothing else, it would cut down on circuitous arguments with companies eager to get around the rules.

Tweedie argues that the ASB is simply following the work that the Americans did between 1978 and 1985, which was then followed by the International Accounting Standards Committee framework of a decade ago, based firmly on the Americans' work. The standard-setting bodies in Canada and Australia have since followed suit. Tweedie argues that when the ASB was established in 1990, "its founders recommended that it should carry out work on what is generally termed a conceptual framework to help to ensure that its standards had a consistent underpinning". He argues that the new draft statement largely follows the international communities' rules. Paterson would argue that the frameworks set up by the Americans and the rest of the world are largely honoured more in the breach than in the observance.

ROBERT BRUCE

However, there has been a change. Paul Ebling has been the project director on the new statement and worked for the old Accounting Standards Committee in the days when standard-setting was beholden to myriad vetoes from the six accounting bodies that then owned the process. International practice certainly did not hold sway. "Ten years ago," he will tell you, "the old ASC would take all of ten seconds to agree something which flew in the face of international practice. Now we cannot do that." The difference is the capital markets. Ten years ago, the idea of cross-border listings was for the few. Now it is for the many.

Paterson, though, is unrepentant. It was largely his dogged opposition that doomed the ASB's first attempt at this in 1995. Now the ASB has returned with a new draft that has taken some points into account, but has largely stuck to its guns. However, this time it comes complete with another document that seeks to clarify points and answer critics and a technical supplement to give more detailed analysis of the issues.

Paterson has yet to see this package, but he has a good idea of what it contains. "The words are different, but the thoughts are just the same," he said this week. "International harmonisation is the excuse."

Where Tweedie and Paterson disagree is over how you show assets and liabilities. This is fairly fundamental. Tweedie would "follow the money" and argue that showing assets and liabilities in terms of how they are affected by transactions is the key.

Paterson is of what might be seen as the old school of prudence and matching. If, for example, a company buys a new hotel, Paterson would argue that the loss on the first year's costs should be capitalised and treated as a deferred cost rather than as an expense. Tweedie would argue that the costs are simply expenses and ought to be shown as such. Paterson's route makes companies' results smoother over a period of several years.

Provisions can be held back or fed into the system as the company judges appropriate. Tweedie's route makes for more of a switchback ride. "Keep it volatile and explain it as it is," says Tweedie. "Get rid of the cushions." There are no prizes for guessing which method is preferred by finance directors.

The problem is that any route is less than perfect. "They see matching as fuddy-duddy," says Paterson, "and they have a belief that a tight focus on assets and liabilities is the bedrock. But such a system breaks down quite quickly the more complex the transactions become."

Meanwhile, Tweedie retorts that the matching system, with all its consequent baffling provisions, was the sort of abuse that the ASB was set up to outlaw. "The dog-eared accounting concepts used in the 1980s were simply not up to the task of dealing with transactions of the late 20th century and had to be replaced," he said this week.

No accounting debate can ever be cut and dried. If things were crystal clear, there would be no need for the debate. But, in the end, as Paterson puts it: "Tweedie is the man with the radio station so he controls the debate."

Equities claw back early loses

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

BANKS

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

BUILDING MATERIALS

CHEMICALS

CONSTRUCTION

DISTRIBUTORS

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

ELECTRICITY

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

HEALTHCARE

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

INSURANCE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

LEISURE & HOTELS

MEDIA

MINING

OIL & GAS

OTHER FINANCIAL

PHARMACEUTICALS

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

LONGS (over 15 years)

UNDATED

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of: 5% 3%

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TRANSPORT

WATER

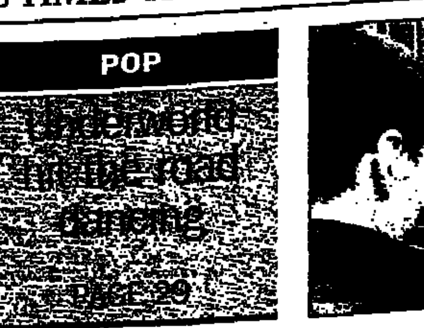
ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET



DANCE
The feminist view of Middle Eastern history
PAGE 38

THE TIMES

ARTS



POP



Playing the world and his wife

CINEMA: Hollywood's favourite spouse has done it again in *Pleasantville*. **Matt Wolf** meets Joan Allen

STEVEN GOLDSTEIN/OUTLINE

Always the bride: she was the wife in *Nixon*, *The Crucible* and *The Ice Storm* before *Pleasantville* — all "pretty good wife roles to play", says Joan Allen

Of the various injustices in this year's Academy Award nominations, possibly the greatest was done to writer-director Gary Ross's *Pleasantville* (reviewed opposite) and, in particular, the luminous wife at its centre, Joan Allen.

Perhaps the film was merely eclipsed by *The Truman Show*, although the two couldn't be more different in the uses to which they put television and the idealised, sanitised world it promotes. Or perhaps the promotional campaign fails to hint at the emotional daring of a film whose message is that the pain and disorder of life are ultimately preferable to an ordered, black-and-white existence.

"This sweet, innocent little world in fact exposes a narrow rigidity," Allen says of the apparently bucolic TV realm that *Pleasantville* inhabits until its characters discover entirely new realms of experience (like sex) that reveal their suburban idyll to be a sham.

The point, says Allen, is that "we are a variety of feelings, and that to homogenise them is not very real. In the end, what choice do we have? We are three-dimensional, (so) we must consider and use our feelings to the best end we possibly can."

Pleasantville won 42-year-old Allen numerous American critics' awards for best supporting actress, an Oscar category in which she earned successive nominations for *Nixon* and *The Crucible*. In 1997 she was impressive once again as Kevin Kline's unhappy, reined-in wife in Ang Lee's quietly revelatory *The Ice Storm*, set in a wife-swapping suburbia at distinct odds from the initially benign pathways of *Pleasantville*. All these films have confirmed Allen's reputation as Hollywood's favourite spouse.

> ‘Ever since Brando, I want to see the real thing. I don't want to see pretend’

"I find that oversimplified," she says amiably. "Yes, these women are all married, but the characters in and of themselves are pretty fascinating. People said *The Ice Storm* was like *Ordinary People*, but it was far more provocative. And if you're going to play wife roles, these are pretty good wife roles to play."

Indeed they are, even if the theatre community, at least, can be forgiven for regretting that Allen is making films at all. Allen began her career alongside John Malkovich, Gary Sinise and *Frasier*'s John Mahoney at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company, where the actress was the still centre of an often volatile production ethos. While Malkovich, Sinise and Kevin Anderson were hurling themselves off walls in productions of *Orphans* and *True West*, Allen was working her way through the plays of Wallace Shawn, Caryl Churchill, Athol Fugard and Chekhov.

In the early 1980s she came to New York with a Steppenwolf production of C.P. Taylor's play *And A Nightingale Sang*, playing the Geordie heroine, and went on to establish herself as an invaluable Broadway asset. She won a Tony Award as the dancer who becomes Malkovich's partner in *Burn This* — a role later played by Juliet Stevenson in London — and was nominated the following season as art historian Heidi Holland in Wendy Wasserstein's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Heidi Chronicles*. Early film work included Brian Cox's blind victim in the 1986 *Manhunter*, as well as distaff lead to Jeff Bridges's automobile impresario in Francis Coppola's *Tucker: The Man and His Dream* (1988).

Did movie offers arrive as a shock? "I liked the idea," Allen recalls, "though I had never thought consciously about wanting to be a film actor. But it pays very well, and I was interested in the money and the different exposure because I had literally not done any of that in Chicago: I was a secretary the whole time to pay the rent while doing plays at night."

Initially, Allen was unsure whether the screen would take to her understatement. In *Face/Off*, for instance, she was content to leave the overt pyrotechnics to Nicolas Cage and John Travolta: "On film, I sort of like work that is more introverted. For instance, *The Godfather* has amazing performances in it, but my favourite is Robert Duvall's. I think I like that reserved tendency."

Her breakthrough role came as Pat Nixon opposite Anthony Hopkins's "tricky Dicky": though the Oliver Stone film failed at the box office, critics hailed Allen's ability to turn the emotionally veiled First Lady into the film's tragic core. "In a way, I felt it was advantag[illegible] playing Pat as opposed to playing Jackie or Nancy Reagan; I had a little more leeway because she was more of an unknown. She was so private that even though America had an image of her, they never ever heard her speak."

As Elizabeth, pained spouse to Daniel Day Lewis's martyred John Proctor in *The Crucible*, Allen was a Vermeer painting come to life, those strong cheekbones pressed into the service of the sort of wrenching part that she has no desire any more to perform on stage. "I was conscious while we were making it of thinking, thank God I don't have to come back tomorrow night and do this again; it's so painful. I mean, I really think you're only as good in the theatre as your last performance, and I can't just fake it or mark it. Ever since Brando, I want to see the real thing; I don't want to see pretend."

That helps to explain why Allen of late has been leaving the stage chores in the family to her husband Peter Friedman (they met doing *And a Nightingale Sang*), who was a Tony Award nominee last June for his role as the Jewish immigrant, Tateh, in the Broadway musical, *Ragtime*. His year-long run in the show left Allen free to look after their daughter, Sadie, now five. And she can use her rising profile to pursue projects unthinkable even a few years back. Allen has recently finished *All the Rage*, an indictment of the LA gun laws in which she once again appears opposite her *Pleasantville* co-star, Jeff Daniels, and hopes this year to play the lead in an Anglo-Irish film about the murdered Irish journalist Veronica Guerin.

"I've begun to feel I've found my legs in film. I understand it better, and I like not doing the same thing night after night, especially since my tendency in the theatre has been to play some really tortured characters. I'm not interested," she smiles, "in being that tortured."

Even the names of the greatest film directors are unknown to today's young audiences, **Nigel Cliff** discovers

Lights, camera, action . . . and then obscurity

How much do most ordinary filmgoers really care about Stanley Kubrick? I do not mean the question in a disrespectful or flippant way. The great director has been deeply and genuinely mourned by the film community since his death last weekend. For many of those in whose lives film looms large, Kubrick was a hero. A distant and maybe reluctant hero, but a hero all the same.

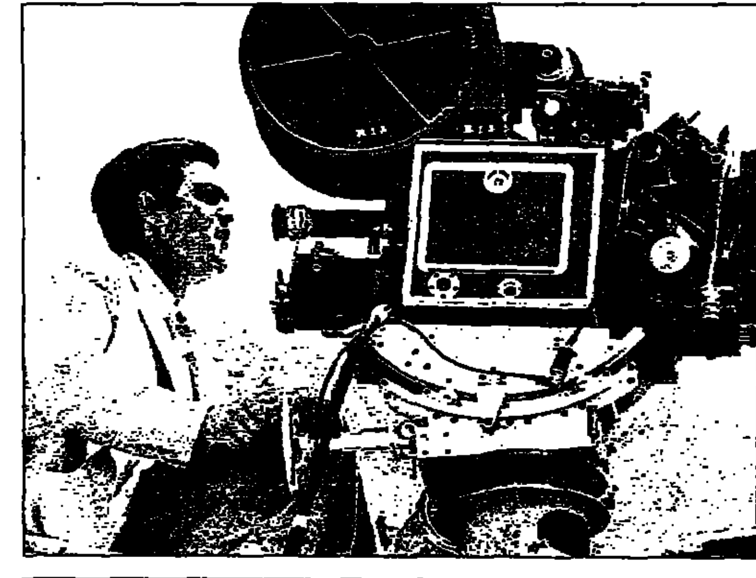
Here was a man who scorned commercial realities and pursued his own vision — typically, that quintessentially 20th-century vision of the terrifying insignificance of an individual in a society grown impersonal, inhuman and out of control. It was seldom so audaciously realised. He will surely be remembered for it.

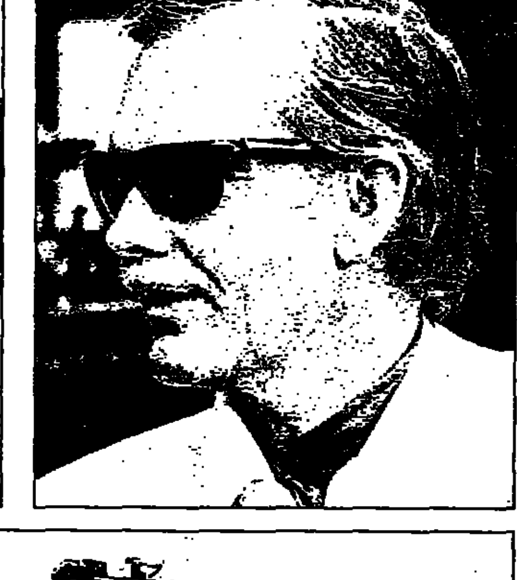
But what does he mean, and what do his peers mean, to today's generation of young filmgoers crowding into the burgeoning multiplexes? After all, many of Kubrick's films — *The Shining*, or *2001* — were far from being art-house esoteria in their time.

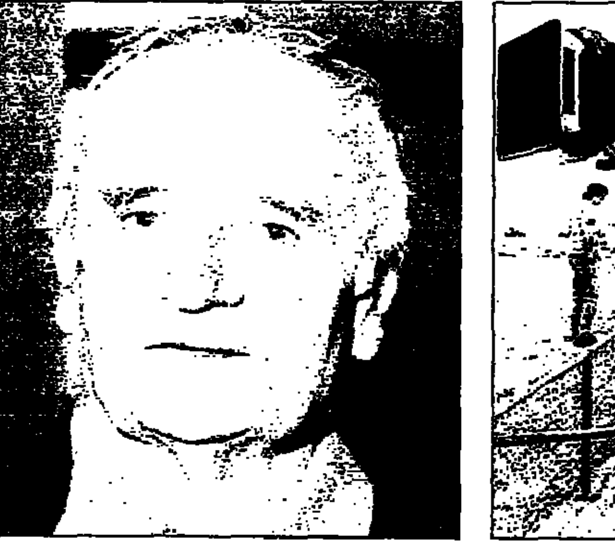
I set out to London's West End to find out, and the answer, if my sample is anything to go by, is "not a lot". In the heartland of commercial film, he is at best half-remembered, at worst not so much an enigma as a complete unknown.

Outside the Virgin in the Trocadero Centre, also home to Segaworld and a giant IMAX screen, Kubrick's name met with almost universal blank stares. Only Darrell Shute, 24, had heard of him, but he had not seen and could not remember his films.

I beat a hasty retreat to the Odeon Leicester Square, which was showing *The Thin Red Line*, directed by Terrence Malick, that other famous recluse. Here, most at least had heard of Kubrick. But few could name any of his films, and only a handful had seen one. Indeed, the movie most often cited was the famously violent *A Clockwork Orange*, which was banned in this country by the director soon after its release and remains almost unseen.









Who they, grandad? Clockwise from top left, Stanley Kubrick, Sam Peckinpah, Robert Altman and Lindsay Anderson

Nor did other directors of his generation fare much better. Sam Peckinpah, born three years before Kubrick in 1925 and also noted (by older filmgoers, at least) for his depiction of explicit violence in films such as *The Wild Bunch*, was unknown in this queue. So was the British director Lindsay Anderson (born in 1923), who quite literally guns for the old order in the Sixties classic *If*. Most of the young filmgoers I spoke to thought Sixties and Seventies films "tame" compared to the post-Tarantino product. Robert Altman, born in 1922, rang few bells despite recent hits such as *The Player* and *Short Cuts*. Unsurprisingly, their great predecessors registered even less. Scorsese and Coppola, both born over a decade later, made a stronger showing.

To the popcorn audience, movies have a notoriously short life. But more than that, even current directors turn out to be of remote interest. Nobody going in to see *The Thin Red Line* could name Malick. Those who had seen *Shakespeare in Love* similarly failed to recall the name of its director, John Madden.

Most felt that the director — with the inevitable exceptions of Spielberg and Tarantino — was irrelevant to their choice of film. "When you decide to go to a movie, it's because of the plot, the stars, the hype, how much money they've spent. *Jurassic Park* with dinosaurs," said Carlos Obeid, 25. Those few who were aware of Kubrick's just-completed last film, *Eyes Wide Shut*, admitted they would consider it only because of its stars, Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman.

In a way, they are right. Most directors gladly admit that being held to account for the huge community of people who go towards making a film is at best a form of shorthand. But in our romantically individualist age, as we might still just about call it, art-forms need authors. They confer respectability on what is in many ways — like theatre in the 16th century — still a young medium searching for its own shape.

The film theorists of the French New Wave certainly thought so. With not a little expediency, they anointed the director as "auteur". And with a few present-day directors, surely, there is no other term that will do. The cast of *The Thin Red Line* readily acknowledge that the film is Malick's alone. "All of us were there to serve him," says Ben Chaplin, one of its leading actors.

If ever there was such an auteur, it was Kubrick. He was a famous perfectionist, obsessive about every detail of his films — in the case of his last work, the as-yet-unreleased *Eyes Wide Shut*, which overshot its shooting schedule by 18 months, notoriously so.

But it hardly comes as a surprise that to many mainstream filmgoers, the directorial concept, and its greatest exemplars, mean nothing. When the majority of films are packaged products marketed to a young audience voracious for the latest, largest, most spectacular and most extreme, what price the auteur?

This conclusion was all too much. I made for the nearby Metro cinema, hang-out of an arty crowd of film cognoscenti. Here my questions met with a very different response. Jonty Claypole, 23, thought I was quite mad. "Of course I know about Kubrick," he scoffed, reeling off a list of his films, including one I had forgotten. Kubrick's work will survive. But he had the mixed fortune to operate in a medium fixated on an audience that has long moved on to the next big thing.

Sunday isn't Sunday

RADIO: Radio 4 has had some comedy flops at 6.30pm, but now it has a flyer, says **Peter Barnard**

Is Radio 4 trying to be funny? Yes, and very hard, too. New comedy shows have been arriving like buses on Oxford Street over the past year but, not unlike buses on Oxford Street, too many of them have hung about getting in the way and too few have shown signs of going somewhere interesting.

Part of the problem is that Radio 4, to its credit, refuses to avoid the risks attendant upon new and experimental comedy, so that much of the output in the late slot at 11pm has proved to be both shortlived and unloved. The fact that both adjectives also apply to some programmes in the 6.30 evening slot, which is supposed to be safer ground, is more worrying.

So there will be relief all round at the success of **The Sunday Format** (Fridays, 6.30pm) which ends a four-week run tomorrow, but which will surely be back before long. Comedy judgments are highly subjective, but this is the wittiest show on radio at present.

I could wish that it was easier to ignore, for *The Sunday Format* takes the mickey out of huge weekend newspapers with all those sections with names like Lifestyle. I'm sorry? No, no, I mean the ones that appear on Sundays, hence the programme title. Saturday papers are an entirely different matter. Trust me.

John Morton is the lead writer on *The Sunday Format* so a good 'un was to be expected: Morton also wrote *People Like Us*, one of the triumphs of radio comedy in recent years. *People Like Us* mercilessly nailed a certain kind of documentary style and in *The Sunday Format* Morton and his team have got their latest subject similarly pinned to the wall.

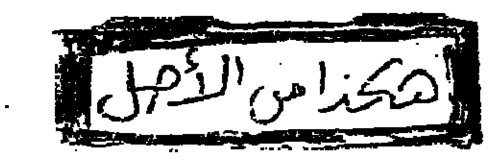
The scripts are so cleverly crafted that even having the cast, which is led by the brilliant Rebecca Front, reading out captions seems to work: "Top left, second from right back row, clockwise from top left . . . "

My favourite lifestyle feature in last week's edition was the one on Lee Summerfield, Premiership superstar, fashion icon and all round Cockney ignoramus. Lee was "interviewed" about the ups and downs of his life and his stormy relationship with a "TV weathergirl turned table dancer".

And Lee, as if you hadn't guessed, had been through a difficult spell when the money rolled in and he rolled around town looking for something that would hurt him. After over-zealous use of drink and drugs, the inevitable conclusion was reached. As Lee explained: "I was suffering from low selfish team."

That kind of wordplay is all over the script and demonstrates Morton and his team possess a trick that some of the newer comedy writers are lacking: an ability to tune in to something that is real and then use imagination to expand the reality into a new dimension. It is a skill insufficiently nurtured in any medium, but *The Sunday Format* demonstrates why mastering it is an effort worth making.





Gagging on a sugar-coated pill

NEW MOVIES: Twinkle of eye and jolly of jape, Robin Williams sets the medical world to rights in *Patch Adams*. **James Christopher** feels ill



Oh, the hipbone's connected to the funny bone: Robin Williams plays Patch Adams as a man with a desire to change the world by turning medical practice into an alternative themepark

Patch Adams
Empire
12, 116 mins
Robin Williams puts the stitches into this absurd medical movie

Pleasantville
Warner Village West End 12, 124 mins
Ingenious spoof of 1950s television values

Central Station
Curzon Mayfair
15, 110 mins
Fernanda Montenegro stars in Walter Salles' s Oscar-nominated Brazilian odyssey

Schizopolis
Curzon Soho
18, 96 mins
Utter gibberish

The day has finally arrived where I feel obliged to issue a *Times* health warning. There is a doctor on the loose with wild delusions that he can cure everything from cancer to bunions by making you laugh.

Mercifully, he is easy to spot. He has a crazed grin, wears bedpans on his feet, and has a nifty trick of turning enema bulbs into clown's noses. If you hand him a scalpel he will probably dig out your swollen appendix and twist it into a poodle balloon. He looks spookily like Robin Williams, and he terrorises hospital wards with his zany impersonations and jokeshop glasses. If you see this plump, middle-aged man, do not indulge him with your deathbed fantasies. He is liable to take them entirely seriously and drown you in that swimming pool of noodles you carelessly happened to mention.

His name is **Patch Adams** and he is shamelessly indulged by Tom Shadyac's lurid, biographical film of his life. Yes. Patch Adams is a real life doctor and he practises his New Age pranks in the Gesundheit Institute in West Virginia.

Whatever the merits of his methods, they are given scant scrutiny here. The film has only two objectives: to extract an obscene amount of sentiment under as little anaesthesia as possible, and to exploit Williams's undeniable genius for madcap clowning. It's a simple enough operation but the results are gruesome.

The film opens in a mental institute in 1969. Williams, a lonely, unshaven leprechaun, has committed himself as a potential suicide. The doctors are heartless, and the inmates are highly-strung nutters shipped in from *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*. Angered by the impersonality of the institute and its staff, Adams checks himself out, enrols in a preppy medical school, and starts tormenting a rack of humourless scheming tutors and smug fellow students.

"What's her name?" Adams asks, not unreasonably, as a doctor prods the gangrenous foot of a patient. Herein lies Williams's revolutionary agenda. He connects with people. Once this is established, every day is Comic Relief day for Adams — and Ground Hog Day for everyone else. When he's not charming laughs out of geriatrics hanging on by their false teeth, he plays the campus Bozo. He arranges a giant pair of papier mâché legs in stirrups around the front door for a visiting convention of gynaecologists. What a wag.

Williams hits the jackpot with a ward full of cancer-stricken bald-headed children undergoing chemotherapy. Marc Shaiman's orchestral soundtrack, led by a quavery flute, testifies to Patch's integrity. The water pistols and glove puppets testify to his relentless good humour. But Adams never so much as lifts a thermometer. He is Groucho Marx impersonating Mother Teresa. But most of all he is a barrel-chested Hollywood comic with an ardent desire to change the world — specifically, to turn medical practice into an alternative themepark. His moment of epiphany — the flight of a butterfly — convinces him that his talents must not be wasted. Unforgivably, that moment arrives at the end of a monstrous piece of manipulation where Williams's drippy, unconvincing romance with the campus ice-maiden (Monica Potter) is crudely amputated to buy our sympathy.

The film swells towards graduation day like *An Officer and a Gentleman*. It swells towards Adams's imminent expulsion from college. But mostly it swells with its own sickly sense of self-righteousness.

In fact, Adams's fantasies would be far better served in **Pleasantville**, a black-and-white television Utopia where the sun always shines, where the bathrooms have no toilets, and sex and violence do not exist. There's more than a whiff of Peter Weir's *The Truman Show* about Gary Ross's debut feature, but it's an ingenious fable in which two dysfunctional teenagers in the gloomy 1990s get sucked into a squeaky-clean 1950s soap opera. What ensues is a wonderful spoof on the reactionary and, for the most part, entirely fictitious family values which modern American politicians are prone to hark back to — namely a world hedged in by picket fences, perfect family units and positive role models. It too is a themepark, but also a sublime piece of kitsch.

The fact that *Pleasantville* is David's (Tobey Maguire) favourite show does nothing to alleviate the nightmare, or the subsequent comedy of him trying, like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, to find a way home. His trashy, busty twin sister, Jennifer (Reese Witherspoon), is utterly horrified. "We're stuck in Nerdsville," she screams. Expertly schooled in the Christina Ricci arts of sexual provocation, Jennifer proceeds to ravish the school basketball hero. Sex is the serpent in this Garden of Eden, and it has a devastating effect. The old certainties come a cropper. The basketball team starts losing. Lover's Lane is transformed into an orgy of rocking cars. The jukebox starts playing Gene Vincent numbers. And Joan Allen, as the mother of the family into which David and Jennifer find themselves insinuated, discovers the joys of masturbation. Pain and confusion follow, mostly for William H. Macy, as the fabulously bewildered father of the family.

There are other sinister developments. Jeff Daniels, as the genial owner of the local diner, discovers the mystery of modern art. The blank books in the library start filling up with knowledge. And — a technically brilliant touch this — those who are infected by the new and disturbing ideas are transformed by colour. J.T. Walsh's bulldog mayor leads the black-and-white fightback. There are doomy speeches about the sanctity of meatloaf. There are *Kristallnacht*-style book burnings, and racist houndings of the "coloureds". Pleasantville turns ugly.

The great tease is whether Pleasantville is paradise lost or paradise found. Is Ross's film a satire on liberal corruption, or an attack on the anxieties and intolerance that prop up the town's cherished values? In the end, perhaps balking at the complexity, Ross plumps for the wholesome, middle-of-the-road message that people change and might be better for it. A truly great film goes begging. But there's enough beautifully acted and magnificently shot hokum to gratify even the most exacting taste.

Much the same can be said for Walter Salles's enthralling Brazilian road movie, **Central Station**. His Oscar-nominated film is dominated by Fernanda Montenegro's astonishing performance as Dora, a hard-bitten former teacher who writes letters for illiterate passers-by in Rio de Janeiro's main railway station. You can read anything into Dora's bruised features and watery brown eyes apart from an easy life. She shuffles home on the Tube like a limp piece of laundry. She bins most of the letters, reads out some to her meddling neighbour (Marilia Pêra) and puts a chosen few in a drawer for possible posting. When one of her clients is flattened by a bus, she entices home the woman's orphaned son (the equally remarkable Vinícius de Oliveira) and coolly, callously sells him on to a ring of organ traffickers.

The piece of greed is redeemed by a piece of madness. Pricked by guilt, Dora rescues the child and takes off in search of his father through Brazil's dusty hinterland. Their odyssey is as eloquent about the fragmented state of Brazil as it is affecting about the relationship between Dora and her ungovernable ward. The boy is in search of an identity; the old woman is in search of her soul. The eloquence of Salles's film lies entirely in the creases: a lost bag stuffed with savings, a friendly truck driver, a van full of barmy pilgrims, and the central characters' mutual mistrust — the boy in her endless lies, she in the sanity of their quest. It's a gripping piece of chemistry by a director who, in the space of two films (this and *Foreign Land*), has become impossible to ignore.

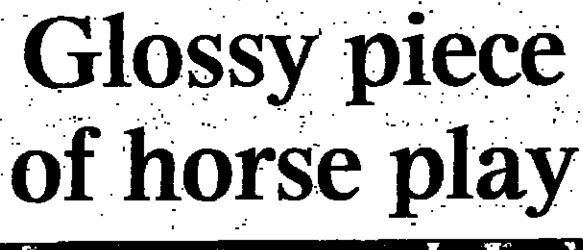
Steven Soderbergh's **Schizopolis** is quite the opposite. If you pay any attention to it at all, you deserve to have your eyeballs fried. Soderbergh wrote, directs and stars in this 96-minute Post-Modern joke, part of a package of six American independent films touring Britain. He assaults us with corporate anxieties. Worse, he assaults us with every cheap camera trick that comes to mind, in no particular order. Playing a businessman whose clone is having an affair with his wife, Soderbergh fast-forwards to the office, throws crumpled paper into a singing bin, makes faces in the mirror, then fast- forwards home. Scenes are replayed in different languages. A man dressed in a bug suit spouts gibberish, has sex with a pretty neighbour and beats up anyone else he sees. How we laughed.

LINKS

WEBSITES:
Patch Adams: www.uip.com
Pleasantville: www.newline.com

TELEVISION:
Barry Norman's Film Night, Sky Premier Sunday 9pm, Monday 3.30pm, Wednesday, 7.30pm)

RADIO:
Talking Pictures, Radio 4, Saturday 5.30pm



Glossy piece of horse play



Chaps in hats: Robert Redford and Kristin Scott Thomas in the movie adaptation of *The Horse Whisperer*

NEW ON VIDEO

■ THE HORSE WHISPERER
Buena Vista, PG, 1998
HARD to believe that a metropolitan type like Kristin Scott Thomas's New York editor would consider throwing in the towel for a cow ranch in Montana. Perhaps the secret lies in Robert Redford's blue eyes. Their famous romance takes up lots of footage in this opulent version of Nicholas Evans's bestseller, while the maimed horse that Redford is curing gets forced into the background. Early scenes carry a strong emotional charge; Scarlett Johansson is most convincing as the daughter driven into an angry silence by the accident that damages her horse and leaves her crippled. But once horse, mum and girl arrive in Montana, it's thumb-twiddling time. Available to rent, and to buy on DVD.

■ DANCE OF THE WIND
Artificial Eye, U, 1997
A CLASSICAL Indian singer (Kitu Gidwani, a leading Indian television star) loses her voice and only recaptures it after finding herself. A predictable story, to be sure, but it is given delicately beautiful treatment by director Rajan Khosa in his first feature. In the corners of scenes, wind rustles manuscript pages, and a tortoise trundles along. Not a film for people in a hurry.

■ THE LAND GIRLS
Film Four, 12, 1997
THREE young British women join the Women's Land Army during the Second World War, and muck in on a remote farm in Devon, where the farmer's son provides after-hours entertainment in the barn. Not much narrative originality here, and that old devil nostalgia saps the period recreations. But David Leland's film cannot be faulted as an acting showcase. Catherine McCormack is the snooty Stella, Rachel Weisz the sensitive Ag, and Anna Friel the brassy working-class hairdresser Prue. Steven Mackintosh supplies the man appeal. A rental release.

■ THE LAST DAYS OF DISCO
Warner, 15, 1998
WHIT STILLMAN, the most laidback of American cinema's social observers, applies his characteristic dry style to the Manhattan dance club scene in the early 1980s. The match doesn't quite work: you want these college-educated twentysomethings to get up and dance, not spew serpentine dialogue and discuss the ethics of *Lady and the Tramp*. But the setting has plenty of atmosphere. And the cast is very lively, including Chloe Sevigny and Kate Beckinsale (wonderfully bitchy) as two girls on the town, and Stillman regular Chris Eigemana as the club asssistant manager, harassed by his boss for letting in "yuppie scum" for free. Available to rent.

■ OUT ON A LIMB
British Film Institute, PG
ANOTHER refreshing BFI release, showcasing the work of Canadian animator Caroline Leaf, who combines unconventional techniques with thoughtful subject-matter, often drawn from literature. There is Kafka's *The Metamorphosis of Mr Samsa*, and Mordecai Richler's story of grieving, *The Street*. The highly personal *The Interview* is of special interest, along with a half-hour film in which Leaf explains the tricks of her trade (like animating with sand).

GEOFF BROWN

■ LISTINGS

Lorca in Salisbury

ARTS

■ OPERA

Barcelona's jewel restored

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargle

LONDON

MICHAEL FEINSTEIN: The New York performer of popular classics and one-time protégé of Ira Gershwin sings a selection of some of the Gershwin brothers' immortal melodies interspersed with reminiscences about the creative duo.
Barbican (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.30pm.

HAMLET: Rupert Wickham plays the hero in Christopher Geelan's production, which re-opens this theatre.
Greenwich, SE10 (0870 840 1111) Opens tonight, 7.30pm.



Andrew Litton conducts the SCO in Edinburgh

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA: The tenor José Cura performs a rare feat in this gala concert where he is billed as both conductor and soloist. On the programme are gems by Verdi, Leoncavallo, Mascagni and Puccini
Festival Hall (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm.

GAMBLERS: Tam Williams plays the "invincible" hero in Gogol's play, directed by Charlie Wood for a King's Head/Double Edge co-production.
BAC (0171-223 2223). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: This concert by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra — another instalment in theTowards the Millennium festival — offers a rare opportunity to hear Nicholas Maw's mammoth orchestral work, Odyssey. Simon Rattle conducts.
Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333). Tonight, 7.30pm.

EDINBURGH: The charismatic American pianist and conductor Andrew Litton returns to the Scottish Chamber Orchestra to conduct the world premiere of Robin Holloway's Double Bass Concerto, inspired by the Romantic works of Schumann. This is flanked by Dvorak's Legends, Op 59, and Schumann's Fourth Symphony. With Duncan McTier as soloist on the bass.
Queen's Hall (0131-668 2019). Tonight, 7.45pm.

SALISBURY: A new version by Rona Munro of The House of Bernarda Alba, Lorca's drama of stifled female longings, directed by Polly Teale for Shared Experience.
Playhouse (01722 320333). Opens tonight, 8pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

◪ **MACBETH:** Rufus Sewell and Sally Dexter play the superstitious thane and his missis in John Crowley's production.
Queens, W1 (0171-494 5041).

□ **DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN:** Mark Little makes his West End debut in Rob Becker's new comedy, tracing the origins of the man/woman difference back to the caves.
Apollo (0171-494 5070).

◪ **SLAVA'S SNOWSHOW:** The excellent Russian clown Slava Polunin returns with new material, as well as his unforgettable finale.
Piccadilly Theatre (0171-369 1734).

□ **BACK2BACK:** A musical double bill: Sharon D. Clarke in Lost and Found set in Grand Central Station with music by Porter, Ellington, Warren Wills; and Peter Straker in Amsterdam based on songs by Jacques Brel.
Bridewell (0171-936 3456).

□ **NO EXP. REQ'D:** Simon Block's new, black comedy where two teenage cartoonists are set the task of painting 100 pictures in five days.
Hampstead (0171-722 9301).

□ **TAKE THE FIRE:** Four monologues for women (gambler, maid, prostitute, desperate lover) by Jean Cocteau, performed by Amanda Harris. Paul Carrington's direction weaves them together.
Lyric Studio, W6 (0181-741 8701).

□ **BLUE HEART:** Caryl Churchill's pair of plays (Heart's Desire and Blue Kettle) express family disruption through tricks with words.
Pleasance Theatre (0171-609 1800).

■ **SPEER:** Klaus Maria Brandauer directs and plays the title role of Hitler's master architect in Esther Vilar's drama. With Sven Eric Bechtolf. See review, page 39.
Almeida (0171-359 4404).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

BELOVED (15): Oprah Winfrey is surprisingly powerful as a runaway slave haunted by poltergeists, lynch mobs, and a dead daughter. Jonathan Demme fails, however, to get inside the festering heart of Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize winner.

FESTEN (15): Thomas Vinterberg's biting black, Danish farce features a disastrous family reunion. Shot with hand-held cameras, it manages to look spontaneous, ghastly, and deliciously voyeuristic.

KINI & ADAMS (NFT): Idrissa Ouédraogo's African buddy movie is a mostly enchanting parable about two friends who share a dream but fall out over money. Good acting lifts it out of the pulpit.

THE 39 STEPS (U): Hitchcock's witty take on Buchan's ripping yarn. Robert Donat's smooth bachelor dashes across Scotland pursued by scampering police and ruthless spies.

CURRENT

THE THIN RED LINE (15): A glittering cast of American soldiers lose their sanity in the South Pacific during the Second World War. Terrence Malick's first film for 20 years is an artistic masterpiece.With Sean Penn, Jim Caviezel, Ben Chaplin and Nick Nolte.

YOU'VE GOT MAIL (PG): Bullet-proof romantic blockbuster with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan who fall in love on the Internet. Written and directed by Nora Ephron.

TITANIC TOWN (15): Julie Walters excels as a pugnacious Catholic housewife in this grim review of Northern Ireland's Troubles circa 1972. Roger Michell directs.

URBAN LEGEND (18): Dire Jamie Blanks horror flick that slashes through an American campus with the help of a migraine-inducing orchestra.

AFFLICTION (15): Paul Schrader's bruising portrait of a frustrated small-town cop. Nick Nolte and James Coburn put in powerful performances as father and son caught in a cycle of male violence.

THIS YEAR'S LOVE (18): David Kane's buzzy comedy charts the mess six Camden Town misfits make of their love lives among the junk stalls.



How Europe's second largest opera house, the Gran Teatre del Liceu, looked before the 1994 fire; the rebuilt auditorium has better sightlines and rake

Take your seats again

OPERA: Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu is rising from the ashes of its fire. **Ronald Crichton** reports

Barcelona's historic opera house, the Gran Teatre del Liceu, was destroyed by a devastating fire on January 31, 1994. The decision to rebuild it was promptly taken. Work proceeded apace and is nearly complete, and the restored Liceu is due to open at the beginning of the 1999-2000 season in October.

The theatre, 150 years old (the history of opera in Barcelona stretches back well beyond that), was built on a site formerly occupied by a convent of Barefoot Trinitarians. The site is ideally central but otherwise inconvenient, with a narrow side-street branching off on the right side at an awkwardly sharp angle. With ingenuity and imagination the architect, Miguel Garriga i Roca, squeezed everything into this unpromising space.

For the auditorium Garriga used the traditional horseshoe form with five tiers, gilded stucco decoration on the proscenium on the front of the balconies, red plush seats and a painted ceiling. Sumptuous but not, except for the puritanically-minded who dislike the style anyway, too garish, it was warmly welcoming without the hint of intimidation one sometimes feels in other large opera houses — for example, La Scala or the Bastille.

The rebuilding of the auditorium in the former style was not a reactionary step, rather a reflection of the pride and affection with which Barcelona regards its opera house. At the same time the opportunity was seized to make such long-desired improvements as removing seats with poor visibility, adding more seats by reducing the number of boxes, and increasing the stalls rake.

There are generous rehearsal rooms with space for recitals, conferences and intimate opera performances. Stage lighting is partly concealed in small circular panels on the ceiling, revealed when they are slightly lowered during the performance. In 1847 the planners built the largest opera house in Europe with a capacity of 3,500, fortunately reduced to 2,400 and now, after reconstruction, a little more than 2,300 — but still the largest in Europe after the Bastille.

Behind the curtain there are no backward glances. The stage is greatly increased not only in depth, but upwards and downwards. Timber and ropes have vanished, giving way to computerised machinery. Scenery for a given performance can wait in a huge space under the stage. Everywhere there are signs of the role to be played by audiovisuals and multimedia. Each season 12 premieres will be broadcast on a pay-per-view basis and shown again 60 days later on TVC, the main Catalan terrestrial channel. And there is one much-needed staffing development: chorus and orchestra, after years of fresh negotiations for each new season, have been placed on permanent contract.

The Liceu was originally a private venue financed by a board of shareholders, each of whom owned one or more seats in the theatre. After the fire of 1994 it emerged that insurance was only payable if the proprietors agreed to rebuilding: even so, the sum was not going to be large enough. After long negotiations the shareholders were persuaded to give up their rights, and by combining public and private money the Liceu has reached this new era.

This blend of old and new, private and public, was the conscious aim of the general director, Josep Caminal. The artistic director is Joan Matabosch. The administrative and the artistic sides will function independently.

The post of musical director goes to the French conductor Bernard de Billy; another stage in this musician's rise to the top. From Matabosch and Billy we may expect an appetising repertory generous to the century about to close (Spanish composers will be strongly represented). We will also, surely, hear and enjoy the young successors to famous Barcelona singers such as Conchita Supervia, Maria Barrientos, Victoria de los Angeles, Montserrat Caballé and the tenors Aragall and, of course, Carreras.

There will be a royal gala on October 7, and the first opera staged in the new auditorium will be *Turandot* — next on the list at the time of the fire — produced by Nuria Espert.

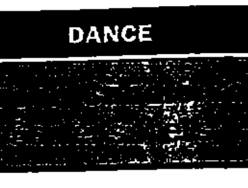
Sadly, a bit of a Turkey

It seems unfair to chastise an arts organisation for biting off more than it can chew. Yet this was the unavoidable response to the opening night of Green Candle Dance Company's world premiere, *On the Road to Baghdad*.

This epic hunk of community theatre is derived from a picaresque saga by the Turkish-American author Güneli Gün. An imaginative feminist scramble of Middle Eastern folklore and history, it charts the adventures of Hürü, a teenager in 16th-century Istanbul.

Gün's spirited heroine is like Alice in an Arabian Wonderland, falling down a temporal rabbit-hole and nearly losing her mind en route to self-fulfilment. With her penchant for time-travelling and gender-bending, she might also be considered a cousin of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*. Hürü serves her future husband, a

DANCE



macho sultan-in-the-making, while disguised as a boy. Transported 800 years earlier to the Baghdad of *The Thousand and One Nights*, she also weds and beds an initially unsuspecting Amazonian Queen.

Bulging with ambition, *Baghdad* is meant to be the high spot of a forward-looking, lottery-funded project begun early last year. The 12-year-old company has been working with primary school children, college students and the over-sixties, helping them to find — and refine — their performance skills.

What a pity, then, that the result of their good intentions is a voluminous piece of failed magic. Clocking in at three hours, this *Baghdad* could be mistaken for a glorified school play. Green Candle's "total theatre" approach is an uneven blend of live music, under-rehearsed dance, aerial work and excessive text.

Lacking a solid unity of style, the professional cast often flounders. As Hürü Emma Cater gets by on sheer pluck. Her journey, however, carries no emotional resonance. As Gün's reinvention of the storytelling beauty Scheherazade, Jacky Lansley comes across like a *female Bela Lugosi*. In the second act, Jason Lahav's turn as a drag belly dancer tips the show into tastelessness. Chantelle Nassari and Chantal McCormick's inventive double-act as quick-change genies simply gets lost in the shuffle.

DONALD HUTERA

EXHIBITIONS

THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN ARTISTS 138th Annual Open Exhibition 12th-27th Mar, Westminster Gallery, Westminster Central Hall, London 10am-7pm daily (not Sun). 0171 222 2723 during Gallery hrs. Admission free.
Registered Charity No. 298241

OPERA & BALLET

COLISEUM 0171 632 8300 (24hr) ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA Ton't 7.30 (LAST PERF) LA TRAVIATA Tomor 6.00 ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

ANTIQUE & ART FAIRS

THEATRES

THEATRES

ADELPHI cc 24hrs (£1 bkg fee) 0171 344 0055 Grps 413 3321/0800 614 903 'KILL FOR A TICKET' M.o.S. WINNER OUTSTANDING MUSICAL Olivier Awards '98 CHICAGO The Musical Maria Friedman Nicola Hughes 'STILL THE HOTTEST SHOW IN TOWN' Ind Mon-Sat 8, Wed & Sat Mats 3

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6000 cc 0171 957 4001/420 0000(bkg fee) Grps 0171 416 6075/413 3321 'Lloyd Webber's best show since Phantom' D.Tel WHISTLE DOWN THE WIND 'BEST NEW MUSICAL IN TOWN' D.Mil 'Completely, completely brilliant' Capital Radio Now booking to March 2000 Mon-Sat 7.45 Mats Thur & Sat 3.00

ALMEIDA AT THE ALBERY 0171 369 1740/344 4444 'Once again the Almeida has enriched London Theatre with a remarkable play' FT 'Gorky's lacerating comedy' D. Mail VASSA 'Savagely funny...hilarious' Ind 'A superb performance from Sheila Hancock' Gdn 3 WEEKS ONLY - MUST END 27 MAR MONDAY ALL SEATS £10 Students/OAP'S £10 Mon-Fri Mon-Sat 7.30pm, Thur & Sat Mat 3pm

APOLLO SHAFTESBURY AVE 0171 494 5509/344 4444 MARK LITTLE in DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN by Rob Becker 'A rave from the Cave ...Hilarious' D Mail 'ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT' John Gray (Men are from Mars..) Mon-Thurs 8, Fri 8.45, Sat 6 & 8.45

APOLLO VICTORIA cc 0171 416 6055 cc24hrs 0171 344 4444/0171 420 0000 Grps 416 6075/413 3321 Andrew Lloyd Webber's STARLIGHT EXPRESS SEE IT AND YOU STILL WON'T BELIEVE IT! Eves 7.45, Tue & Sat 3pm Tickets from £12.50 NOW BOOKING TO MARCH 2000

CAMBRIDGE 494 5080/416 6060/344 4444/420 0000 (+bkg fee)Grps 494 5454 416 6075/413 3321/436 5588 DARREN DAY as Danny GREASE NOW IN IT'S 6TH SENSATIONAL YEAR 'A Monster Hit' D. Mirror Mon-Sat 7.30pm, Wed & Sat Mat 3pm BOOKING TO THE MILLENNIUM

COMEDY 0171 369 1741 344 4444 (+bkg fee) EWAN McGREGOR LITTLE MALCOLM by David Halliwell Directed by Denis Lawson Mon-Sat 8pm Mats Thu & Sat 3pm Front row seats available on day 2 hours prior to perf. MUST CLOSE SATURDAY

COMEDY 0171 369 1731 0171 344 4444 SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER by Tennessee Williams With Sheila Gish and Rachel Weisz Directed by Sean Mathias From 8 April. 14 weeks only

CRITERION 369 1737/344 4444 HILARIOUS 4th GREAT YEAR THE REDUCED SHAKESPEARE COMPANY THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (abridged) Mats Thur at 3pm, Sat at 5pm Sun at 4pm, Eves at 8pm 'Laugh, I nearly died' Times 'GO NOW' S.Times Tuesdays only at 8pm THE COMPLETE HISTORY OF AMERICA (abridged) Booking til September '99

DOMINION 0171 656 1888/ 344 4444, Groups (12+) 0171 416 6098/413 3321 Disney's BEAUTY AND THE BEAST The smash hit musical 'A GREAT NIGHT OUT! BEG, STEAL,BORROW OR, BETTER STILL, JUST BUY A TICKET!' Melody Radio Mon-Sat 7.30, Mats Wed & Sat 2.30 NOW BOOKING TO FEB 2000

DRURY LANE THEATRE ROYAL SS cc (bkg fee) 24hr 7 days 0171 494 5000/344 4444/420 0000 Grps 494 5454/413 3311/0870 841 0841 MISS SAIGON 'THE CLASSIC LOVE STORY OF OUR TIME' NOW IN ITS 10TH BREATHTAKING YEAR! Eves 7.45 Mats Wed & Sat 3pm Good seats avail for Wed Mat & some perfs - apply B.O.

DUCHESS 0171 494 5075 cc 0171 420 0000 (bkg fee) Grps 0171 494 5454 DAVID BURKE SARA KESTELMAN MATTHEW MARSH in MICHAEL FRAYN'S MULTI AWARD WINNING PLAY COPENHAGEN Dir by MICHAEL BLAKEMORE 'Masterly performances in a masterwork' Times Mon-Sat 7.30 Mats Thu & Sat 2.30

FORTUNE BO & CC 0171 836 2238/344 4444/494 5388 NOW IN ITS 10th HIT YEAR JOHN NETTLETON ROBERT HANDS Susan Hill's THE WOMAN IN BLACK Adapted by Stephen Mallatratt 'The most thrilling and chilling play for years' D.Mail Mon-Sat 8.00, Mats Tue 3.00 & Sat 4.00 Running time 2 hrs

GARRICK 0171 494 5085/344 4444 (bkg fee) Grps 0171 494 5454/413 3321 'AN EPIC FOR OUR EPOCH' E.Std The Royal National Theatre Production WILLIAM GAUNT PHILIP WHITCHURCH MARJORIE YATES JB Priestly's AN INSPECTOR CALLS 'A THRILLING PIECE OF THEATRE WHICH MUST BE SEEN BY ALL' D.Mail 'AWE-INSPIRING!' The Times Mon-Fri 7.45, Sat 5 & 8.15 Mats Wed 2.30

GIELGUD 0171 494 5085 344 4444 (+bkg fee) MICHAEL PENNINGTON CLIVE FRANCIS GROSS INDECENCY The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde A New Play Previews tomorrow at 7.45pm

HAYMARKET, THEATRE ROYAL 0171 930 8800 cc 344 4444 (bkg fee) RICHARD DREYFUSS MARSHA MASON NEIL SIMON'S THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE FROM 23rd MARCH

HER MAJESTYS 24hr 494 5400 (bkg fee)cc344 4444/420 0000(fee) Grps 494 5454/413 3311/436 5588 ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER'S AWARD-WINNING MUSICAL THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA Directed by HAROLD PRINCE NOW BKG TO JUNE 99 Eves 7.45 Mats Wed & Sat 3.00 Apply to Box Office daily for returns and Wed Mat availability

HAYMARKET BO & cc 0171 930 8800 FASCINATING AIDA BAREFACED CHIC! 'Sweet FA are back in town and back on top' D.Mil Mon-Sat 7.45 Mats Sat 4.00 MUST END SATURDAY

LONDON APOLLO Hammersmith BO(no bkg fee) 0870 606 3400 cc(+bkg fee) 420 0000/344 4444 Grps 0171 416 6075 Leslie Bricusse's DOCTOR DOLITTLE Starring PHILLIP SCHOFIELD 'THIS IS A SURE-FIRE HIT' ITV 'PURE PLEASURE' Daily Mail Book, music & lyrics by Leslie Bricusse Directed by Steven Pimlott Tue-Sat 7.30, Mats Wed, Sat 2.30 Call B.O. for extra Easter Mats

LONDON PALLADIUM 0171 494 5030/344 4444 (bkg fee) Grps 0171 494 5454/413 3321 SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER 'A SENSATIONAL NIGHT OUT' D.Mirror 'HOT STUFF ANY NIGHT OF THE WEEK' Times 'FEVER IS STILL INFECTIOUS' D.Tel Mon-Sat 7.30 Wed & Sat Mats 2.30 NOW BOOKING TO OCT 1999 SOME SEATS AVAIL FOR WEDS MAT

LYCEUM BO+CC(24hrs)0870 606 3440 0171 416 6089/344 4444/420 0000 THE SEASON'S SENSATION The Royal National Theatre Production Rodgers & Hammerstein's OKLAHOMA! Winner of 4 Laurence Olivier Awards inc Outstanding Musical Production Best Musical - Eve Standard Award 'OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL EVENING' D. Mail, Guard, Times, Ind, etc Eves 7.30 Mats Wed & Sat 2.30 100 standby seats @ £5 held 'til the day Mon-Thur at B.O. 15 WEEKS ONLY TO 26 JUNE

NATIONAL THEATRE BO 0171 452 3000 Grps 0171 452 3010 24hr cc bkg fee 0171 420 0000 OLIVIER Ton't, Tomor 7.00 (PREVIEWS) TROILUS AND CRESSIDA by William Shakespeare LYTTELTON Ton't, Tomor 7.30 THE FOREST a comedy by Alexander Ostrovsky in a new version by Alan Ayckbourn. COTTESLOE Today 2.30 & 7.30 GUIDING STAR a new play by Jonathan Harvey. Tomor 7.30 THE RIOT a new play by Nick Darke.

LYRIC 0171 494 5045/344 4444 ANIMAL CRACKERS The Marx Brothers Musical Comedy Now previewing, Mon-Sat 7.45 Mats Weds & Sat 3.00

NEW LONDON Drury Lane WC2 BO 0171 405 0072 cc 24hrs 344 4444 Grps 405 1567/413 3311 THE ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER/ T.S. ELIOT INTERNATIONAL AWARD WINNING MUSICAL CATS Eves 7.45 Mats Tue & Sat 3.00 Bars open at 6.45 Good seats avail for Tues Mat

OLD VIC 0171 494 5372 (£1 fee) SEASON EXTENDED UNTIL 25 SEPT DAVID SUCHET Until 17th April in *AMADEUS* BY PETER SCHAFFER NICHOLAS LE PREVOST as Salieri From 19th April 'Highly Theatrical & superbly directed by PETER HALL' Gdn 'CRACKING NIGHT OUT' D.Tel 'EVERYONE MUST GO' NoW Eves Mon-Sat 7.30 Mats Wed & Sat 2.30

PALACE THEATRE 0171 434 0909 cc 24hrs (bkg fee) 0171 344 4444 (bkg fee) grps 0171 413 3311 THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR MUSICAL LES MISERABLES NOW IN ITS 14TH RECORD BREAKING YEAR Eves 7.30 Mats Thu & Sat 2.30 GOOD SEATS AVAILABLE FOR THURSDAY MATINEE & Limited nos of seats avail daily from B.O. for eve performances Latecomers not admitted until the interval

PEACOCK THEATRE 863 8222 Sadler's Wells in the West End PACO PENA Flamenco Dance Co 'New levels of rhythmic drive' Independent on Sunday 'Flamenco at its finest' E.Std Tue-Sat 8pm. Extended to Mar 20 Mat: Sat & Sun 3pm Many tickets under £20

PEACOCK THEATRE 0171 863 8222 Sadler's Wells in the West End JULIA MIGENES Diva on the Verge 'Don't miss Migenes' What's On 14 March at 8.00 - Last Performance

PICCADILLY 0171 369 1734/ 344 4444, 5 WEEKS LEFT! SLAVA'S SNOWSHOW The World's Greatest Clown Mon-Sat 7.30, Mats Thurs & Sat 2.30

PHOENIX BO/CC 0171 369 1733 /344 4444/420 0000 (fee) BEST MUSICAL Olivier/Drama Awards Plays & Players/Ivor Novello Awards WILLY RUSSELL'S BLOOD BROTHERS '...Brings the audience to its feet and roaring its approval' D Mail Eves 7.45 Mats Thurs 3pm Sat 4pm

PRINCE OF WALES 0171 839 5987 0171 420 0052 cc/ 24hrs 344 4444 'FULL OF URGENT PASSION AND VITALITY, WEST SIDE STORY STILL HITS HOME AND HITS HOME HARD' D.Telegraph Eves 7.45, Mat Thurs & Sat 3.00

PRINCE EDWARD 0171 447 5400 0870 8401111/0171 344 4444 Benny Andersson & Bjorn Ulvaeus' MAMMA MIA! A new musical based on the songs of ABBA Performances begin 23 March

QUEENS 0171 494 5040 (£1 bkg fee) Groups 0171 494 5454/0870 240 1205 RUFUS SEWELL SALLY DEXTER 'Penetrating performances' S.Tms MACBETH by William Shakespeare Eves7.30 Mats Sat 2.30

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY STRATFORD 01789 295623/ 0541 541051 TOP: THE DISPUTE Today 2.30 & 7.30 LONDON 0171 638 8891 Pit: BAD WEATHER Today 2.00 & 7.15 Young Vic: TALK OF THE CITY Today 2.00 & 7.15

ROYAL COURT Duke of York's 0171 565 5000 cc/24hrs 420 0005 Best New Play Olivier Awards 1999 THE WEIR by Conor Mc Pherson, Mon-Sat 7.30 Wed & Sat Mat 3.30 Upstairs (Ambassadors, West St) LIFT OFF by Roy Williams Mon—Sat 9.30, Sat Mat 4.00 TRUST by Gary Mitchell From Tom 7.00

SAVOY THEATRE BO 0171 240 1166 'ROBERT LINDSAY IN GLITTERING FORM' D.Mail The Royal Shakespeare Company production of RICHARD III 'AMBITIOUS, INVENTIVE AND VILLAINOUSLY FUNNY' Ind on Sun Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Mat 2.30 LAST 3 WEEKS - ENDS 27 MARCH

SAVOY THEATRE 0171 836 8888 JOSS ACKLAND DOROTHY TUTIN THE GIN GAME by D.L. Coburn directed by Frith Banbury 'A STUNNING PIECE OF THEATRE' Boston Globe Mon-Sat 7.45 Mats Thur & Sat 3.00 75 PERFS ONLY FROM 30 MAR

SHAFTESBURY 07000 21 12 21 0870 840 1111/0171 344 4444 (bkg fee) 'RUSH TO ... RENT ...IT'S THE HOTTEST PROPERTY IN TOWN' NOTW Mon-Sat 7.30, Mats Wed, Sat 3.00 NOW BOOKING TO 2000

ST MARTINS 0171 836 1443 Eves 8, Tue 2.45, Sat 5 & 8 AGATHA CHRISTIE'S THE MOUSETRAP 47th YEAR

STRAND THEATRE Box Off & cc (no fee) 0171 930 8800 cc (bkg fee) 0171 344 4444/420 0000 Groups 0171 413 3321/ 0171 436 5588 *BUDDY* The Buddy Holly Story 'BRILLIANT' Sun *BUDDY* 'WONDERFUL STUFF' Sun Tel Tues-Thurs 8.0 Fri 5.30 & 8.30 Sat 5 & 8.30 Sundays 4.00pm, Kids 1/2 price ALL SEATS 1/2 PRICE FRI 5.30 PERF 10th TRIUMPHANT YEAR Over 3,500 Performances Now booking 'til the year 2000

VAUDEVILLE 0171 836 9987 0171 344 4444 (+bkg fee) ALISON STEADMAN SAMANTHA BOND JULIA SAWALHA THE MEMORY OF WATER By Shelagh Stephenson Directed by Terry Johnson 'WICKEDLY FUNNY' Independent Mon-Sat 8pm Mats Thu & Sat 3pm

VICTORIA PALACE 0171 834 1317 (no booking fee) 'Must See' Guardian THE COLOUR OF JUSTICE The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Eves Mon-Sat 7.45pm Mats Thurs 2pm & Sat 4pm All seats £12.50, Fri & Sat £15.50 Final perfs - until Mar 13

WYNDHAMS 369 1736/344 4444 WINNER 1998 TONY AWARD BEST PLAY 1997 OLIVIER AWARD BEST COMEDY 1996 STANDARD AWARD "ART" A new play by Yasmina Reza Trans by Christopher Hampton 'Stunningly brilliant and funny' Times Eves 8, Mats Wed 3, Sat & Sun 5

THEATRE
Hitler's master-builder

ARTS

MUSIC
Dohnányi's Vienna whirl

Architect of world disaster

Apart from a desk, bits of bric-a-brac, and the walls of the Almeida stage itself, Hans Hoffer's set for *Speer* contains just one item, the scale model of a building. But what an item, what a building! Imagine St Paul's, St Peter's and the Taj Mahal fused together and then redesigned by a committee of Roman emperors preparing for their ritual deification. Mentally expand the model to its proposed size, which is 320 metres high, with room for 180,000 inside and a crowd of a million jostling adoringly outside. There you have the huge funghoid dome,

THEATRE



the classical colonnades and the chunky towers of the edifice Albert Speer planned for the centre of Germania — and, according to Esther Vilar's didactic but engrossing two-hander, the reason he wanted Hitler to conquer everything and everyone.

"For a world capital one needs a world," explains Klaus Maria Brandauer's Speer, and, not for the only time, the Austrian actor makes you credit an outrageous line. Indeed, both the author and her director, who is Brandauer himself, must be applauded for having hired one of the few living men capable of performing beside that horrible, fascinating model and somehow upstaging it. His Speer has moments of mottled rage, notably when he is accused of complicity in the Holocaust, but mostly this sleekly-dressed architectural Faust is cool, quiet, wry — and utterly mesmeric.

Speer (sponsored by AT&T) asks us to believe that the recently released Nazi came to lecture in the East Germany of 1980, and, at the end of a chat with a state apparatchik called Bauer, was asked to put his organisational skills to saving a bankrupt state from utter ruin. Even allowing for an ironic ending, this is so preposterous a situation, so barefaced an excuse for a debate, that one wonders why Vilar did not set her play in the sort of limbo Michael Frayn chose for *Copenhagen*, which deals with one of the topics that interests her, Speer's failure to get Hitler the A-bomb. But never mind. The debate, though never very searching or psychologically trenchant, does have energy and point.



DONALD COOPER

Sven Eric Bechtolf is the East German apparatchik interrogating Klaus Maria Brandauer's charming, sophisticated Speer in Esther Vilar's play

The shabby room is the dock in which Speer stands arraigned by Sven Eric Bechtolf's wonderfully sly, watchful Bauer, with post-Nuremberg evidence added to the testimony. How could he not have known about the Holocaust when he was at a meeting where Himmler announced it? Didn't he recommend that Jews sacrifice their houses to the thousands of Aryans who would have been displaced by his megalomaniac plans? Speer puts up some resistance to these questions, but none to Bauer's suggestion that his skills as armaments supremo prolonged the war by two years and cost millions of lives. His aim, he agrees, was to achieve victory and thus become what Hitler called him: "The greatest architect of the past 4,000 years."

The debate veers this way and that, now touching on the Nazi past of prominent West Germans, now setting Speer's Thatcherite views against those of an East German regime still defending the socialism that has brought its people the Wall, the Stasi, the gunshots we intermittently hear, and economic meltdown. But it is clear that Vilar, herself the daughter of Germans exiled to Argentina, is mainly concerned to deromanticise a man already half-forgiven by history. As Brandauer so brilliantly shows us, Speer is all charm and sophisticated self-deprecation, culture and charisma. As he also suggests, he was a gifted opportunist who would have served anyone, God or Satan, to fulfil his ambition.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Essex lords of the dancefloor

POP

Underworld
Astoria

Since emerging from Essex almost eight years ago, Underworld have been one of Britain's most highly rated dance bands. Inspired by the Acid House scene of the late 1980s, the trio were among the first wave of electronic acts to turn faceless techno into palatable pop. That Underworld have so far failed to match the commercial success of their peers, the Prodigy, does not appear to have damaged the group's appeal. This was the first of three sold-out London shows on a ten-date UK tour to promote the release last week of their third album, *Beaucoup Fish*, which entered the charts at No 3, and Underworld's every move provoked a rapturous, emotional response.

Compared to contemporaries of a similar standing such as Orbital or Leftfield, Underworld have stuck staunchly to their club origins. As if to prove the point, the atmosphere inside the Astoria resembled a rave. Rather than a support act, band member Darren Emerson played a DJ set. The gig itself did not begin until after 11pm, by which time the stifling heat had convinced much of the crowd to strip off as many layers of clothes as was decent.



Underworld: standing out in the sea of electronica produced worldwide

Underworld eventually appeared on stage to a riot of coloured lights and a backdrop of five huge video screens, which mixed striking graphics with footage being filmed live, so the band and its banks of electronic equipment appeared to be housed in a kind of multimedia cave. To one side, thirty-something singer Karl Hyde — a skinny blond in jeans and a baggy jumper — danced frantically while musicians Rick Smith and Emerson busied themselves at keyboards, samplers and techno desks.

The set, which lasted for almost two hours, consisted of around a dozen strung-out songs culled from all three of Underworld's albums. That the new material slipped seamlessly into classic tracks such as *Cowgirl*, *Rez* and *Rowla* proved how little the band's basic sound has altered over the years. At once intelligent, atmospheric and dancefloor-friendly, it is essentially techno-trance sculpted from complex, hard-edged rhythms and pulsating, digital grooves.

Although clearly of the highest technical order, Underworld's music relies heavily on disjointed fragments of verse, written and sung solely by Hyde, to distinguish it from the sea of electronica now produced all over the world. Consequently, when the singer's random contributions gelled with Smith and Emerson's intense endeavours the result was electrifying. At other times it was merely mediocre.

Midway through the performance, Underworld played what should have been their trump card, *Born Slippy*. The band's only big hit to date (since their inclusion on the *Trainspotting* soundtrack), the song has become a modern-day dance anthem. But while the audience went wild, the trio had to try hard to feign enthusiasm. *Born Slippy*'s days may well be numbered.

LISA VERRICO

True to the spirit of Mahler

CONCERTS

Philharmonia/Dohnányi

This concert in the Philharmonia Orchestra's *Mahler and Vienna: Beginnings and Endings* series made perfect sense even without a note of Mahler being played. One beginning was supplied in Schubert, perhaps the most direct of Mahler's musical ancestors and a composer whose Ninth Symphony paved the way for the massive symphonic structures of those who followed. One ending was supplied in Berg's Violin Concerto, a work full of Viennese angst, dedicated to the memory of Alma Mahler's daughter by Walter Gropius.

Under Christoph von Dohnányi's baton the Berg was always bound to be impressive, but it was made all the more special by the solo playing of Kyung Wha Chung, giving her first London performance in well over a decade.

After a long, family-raising sabbatical, she proved that the big tone and fearless attack so characteristic of her youthful performances are still there, but this was also a mature interpretation of profound emotional feeling.

From an opening in which Dohnányi drew sounds of silky translucence but perhaps not hot-house intensity, the Korean violinist set off with real purpose on the work's spiritual journey. Neither she nor the conductor allowed all the dancing detail to come to the surface, but both caught the fierceness of the Scherzo and the desperate anger of the Allegro, where the soloist was able to ride the full orchestral outbursts. The smoothly phrased woodwind quotations of the Bach chorale evoked a distant organ, underlining the valedictory mood of the piece.

The performance of Schubert's Great C major Symphony provided a stirring contrast without quite scaling the work's loftiest heights. There is probably an almost Mahlerian madness lurking somewhere in the score, but Dohnányi delivered a straightforward account that stressed its sunnier side. He established a pastoral feeling at the very beginning and got buoyant playing without ever pushing too hard. In the middle movements he conjured up further rustic images, highlighting fresh detail, but he also built the Andante towards a menacing climax. Polished playing from all sections of the Philharmonia gave the finale great punch.

JOHN ALLISON

Striking acoustic miracle

Tokyo String Quartet

IT IS a wasted opportunity, from an aesthetic point of view, to present a high-quality chamber ensemble like the Tokyo String Quartet in a space as large as the Bridgewater Hall. Inevitably, some of the detail and intimacy will get lost. But it would also be a waste to restrict the opportunity to the comparatively small audience that could be accommodated in a hall of the appropriate size.

Sadly, in that the audience numbered little more than the usual group of specialists, the hall lost out in both respects on this occasion. It was not, on the other hand, as disappointing an event as it might have been. A good ensemble can adjust to any acoustic, and it just happened that the sparsely populated hall, with not too many bodies present to absorb the sound, simplified the problem. The textural and expressive variety in Haydn's Quartet in E flat needed more pointed projection to reach the distant corners.

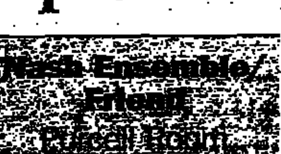
On the other hand, the performance of Webern's Op 5 was scarcely short of miraculous. If anything was going to suffer it was surely the extra-fine detail of those five little pieces, much of it whispered at sub-pianissimo levels and further reduced in sonority by being produced on the bridge or on the fingerboard of the instrument. And yet it was all there, indicating not only the most minutely painstaking preparation but also an uncanny ability to balance the demands of score with those of the acoustic reality.

The loss was that the effect of the louder dynamic levels, as in the outbreak of expressionistic panic at the beginning of the work, was less oppressive than it could have been elsewhere. The gain was in the extreme attenuation of sounds that are meant to be scarcely audible but, in normal conditions, rarely are. The distinction of the interpretation was the beauty in the phrasing and colouring of those elegiac melodic lines which are as expressive as a whole movement by anyone else.

Anyone else includes Tchaikovsky, whose String Quartet No 3 in E flat minor was the main item in the programme in terms of length. It is certainly a masterful work. Even so, in a programme including two memorial tributes — Webern's to his mother, Tchaikovsky's to a violinist colleague — it was not the shudderingly funereal, requiem-chanting, overtly protesting expression of Russian melancholy that made the greater emotional effect.

GERALD LARNER

Five powerful pieces



Nash Ensemble/Friend
Purcell Room

THE first concert in the Nash Ensemble 20th-Century Music Series on Tuesday night focused on the works of Harrison Birtwistle: five pieces, ranging from his early association with the Pierrot Players to his latest commission, interspersed with carefully selected works of Debussy and Stravinsky (*The Soldier's Tale*).

The commission, placed strategically at the end of the programme, made a fitting climax, demonstrating as it did that Birtwistle is still at the height of his considerable powers. For *The Woman and the Hare*, Birtwistle requested a text from David Harsent, librettist of his opera *Gawain*. Harsent's text, archetypically symbolic and characteristically elusive, proved to be too long, leading Birtwistle to apportion sections of it to a reciter, setting the rest for soprano.

The effect is not unlike recitative and aria sounding simultaneously, the more so since the vocal line moves slowly, syllable by syllable. With its melismas soaring right through the soprano's range to high Cs and Ds, the latter (delivered impressively by Claron McFadden) forms a reflective soliloquy which holds the dramatic momentum, generated by the reciter (Julia Watson), in perfect equipoise.

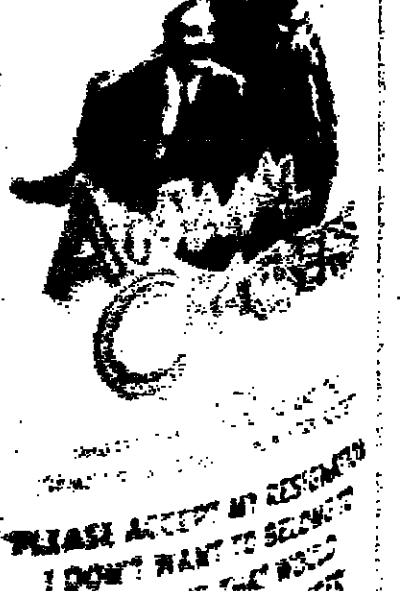
That control of the dramatic impetus, together with Birtwistle's sure sense of timing and fastidious ear for timbre, add up to another score of both identifiable provenance and remarkable originality, expertly realised by members of the Nash Ensemble under the assured direction of Lionel Friend.

The Cantata for voice and ensemble, also with McFadden as soloist, dates from three decades earlier, but in its fragmentary utterances and interpenetration of vocal and instrumental lines it is not so far removed from *The Woman and the Hare* — unlike the arrangements of motets by Machaut and Ockeghem, also dating from 1969, with their bizarre instrumental combinations (piccolo, bass clarinet, glockenspiel among them).

From roughly halfway between the early and late pieces come the *Duets for Storab*, a work for two flutes that recalls the traditional Scottish pibroch in its six-movement structure.

Colin Matthews's scoring of Debussy's *Trois poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé* exploited the sultry timbres of solo string or wind instruments and displayed a worthy command of nuance.

BARRY MILLINGTON



BOOKS

She divorced him, in the end

Malcolm Bradbury glimpses the home life of the Undivine Marquis

SADE
A Biographical Essay
By Laurence L. Bongie
University of Chicago Press, £23.25
ISBN 0 226 06420 4

AT HOME WITH THE MARQUIS DE SADE
By Francine du Plessix Gray
Chatto & Windus, £20
ISBN 1 85619 607 0

Though it was certainly not new, the case for the not-so-divine *marquis*, *Donatien* Alphonse Francois, Marquis de Sade, has been advanced with an ever increasing intensity over the course of our century. Guillaume Apollinaire chased his unpublished writings and celebrated him as "the freest spirit that ever lived". The new sexologists saw him as a fountainhead of their forbidden knowledge: half, with Masoch, of a great modern twosome. For 1920s *communists he became a key* libertarian, a true *philosophe*, one of the great Jacobins. French surrealists like Breton hailed him as "the divine marquis", a hero of the imagination, "a surrealist in sadism." *For literary libertarians*, he was the great example of the writer who cannot be denied.

In recent times the homage has grown ever greater. Foucault and Lacan celebrated his radical transgression, Barthes *the coprophiliac pleasure* of his text. Angela Carter found a feminist handle to examine his surreal misogyny and his vision of female irrational passions. With his commanding lesson that "sex is violence", Camille Paglia has him as the most necessary of the unread Western writers. The writer said to have inflamed Robespierre to blood-lust and Swinburne to fits of uncontrollable laughter has been pantheonised with the inclusion of his works in the Bibliotheque de la Pleiade. Now there are Sadeian holiday-trips ("the romance of the illicit") to the ruins of his grim castle of La Coste in the Vaucluse.

And yet . . . As Laurence Bongie reminds us in his refreshingly unadmiring study, Sade was almost none of the things his supporters from the Romantics onward said he was: not a natural man, a true *libertarian, a true philosophe*, a radical atheist, an honest Jacobin, or a man imprisoned simply for his beliefs. The great acceptance of his pornographic works that time, tolerance and modern theory (the text *not* the author) allows should not, he says, blind us to the facts of his life. For one thing Sade certainly was: he was a sadist — that is, a source of pain, a dangerous user and abuser of others (that, not his ideas, put him in the Bastille). An irrationalist in the Age of Reason, a narcissist in the Age of Revolution, an aristocrat in the eternal arrogance of his desires and in his corrupt exploitation of every situation, he belongs to the most distorted aspects of the age that led from the Utopia of the Enlightenment to the psychotics of Romanticism.

Now, for various reasons, we seem to be revising "our" Sade. The battle for literary freedom is over. The notion that a text is a floating signifier and nothing else won't do. Feminism has more useful things to do than trawl those wearying Sadean fantasies. And, as the historical and biographical evidence gets better, we can now see far more of his upbringing, *his* relation to *ancien régime* culture, his character — and his women.

The background figures have grown much sharper. There is Sade's father, another aristocratic, highly ambitious, *finally disappointed court* libertine, who married to use his well-born wife as a route of access to a princess he desired even more. There is Sade's disappointed mother, who retreats to a convent, avoiding the rages of her already tempestuous son. There is his wife, Renée-Pelagie, wealthy, pious, bourgeois, not especially attractive — whom he married under similar exploitative circumstances. She became a co-conspirator *in his* orgies, her task to visit her husband in prison to provide the luxuries he craved: the works of Montaigne, an anal dildo.

Since the Sadeian passions involved much violence toward the mother-figure, this is seen of central significance in both the books under review. Bongie's is the more scholarly, an analysis of the new materials and of the psycho-pathological sources of Sade's orgiastic, infantile, tempestuous, transgressive character. It sees his mind as hyper-intelligent and essentially hypocritical, his political observations as bogus, his tactics as crass and cunning, the consequences of his public and sexual activities as of little surprise.

With access to similar new materials, Francine du Plessix Gray offers more still: a vivid new biography (following on from Maurice Lever's recent account). Her title has a comic aspect. Like Holidays with Dracula, a spell at home with de Sade is one thing you wouldn't crave. But there the women around him were: so, like other recent critics, Gray seeks to understand Sade's life *through the "extraordinary"* women in it. Like Bongie she notes the significance of the half-absent mother; but in the 18th century, an age of complex domestic politics, most women were. She explores the *formidable mother-in-law*, Madame de Montreuil, who first protected Sade and then had him imprisoned (the Revolution helped him take his revenge). And she considers the wife who, despite the abuses he offered, stood — until in the new order divorce became possible — by her man.

All ended, as we know, in Charenton asylum, where our marquis performed his plays, kept a library, insisted on his insatiable desires and perceived himself a victim of all the histories, the Old Regime and the New One: the Monarchy, the Terror, the Consulate. He asked for his grave to be obscured; his life and his writings became emblems of gratified transgression. His universe of victims and executioners became a surreal cultural fantasy. Bongie's book suggests why this is still disturbing. And, though it draws on Lever and accepts many of the romanticisations of the Undivine Marquis ("one of the first great rebels of modern times"), du Plessix Gray's strong, well-researched biography brings not only him but many of those around him to a new, more rounded literary life.

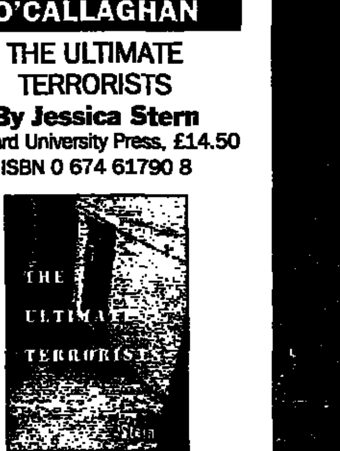


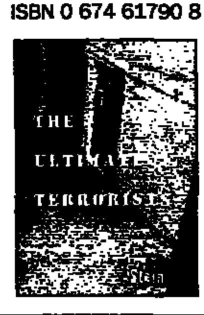
Monster who became a hero of the Surrealists: Man Ray's imaginary portrait of the Marquis de Sade, painted in 1938

To guard against the ultimate terrorists

SEAN O'CALLAGHAN

THE ULTIMATE TERRORISTS
By Jessica Stern
Harvard University Press, £14.50
ISBN 0 674 61790 8





The first thing to be said about this book is that the author's research is breathtakingly thorough, and the prose, so often describing complex technological detail, surprisingly lucid. The era of "the ultimate terrorists", implying nuclear, biological or chemical weapons may not yet have dawned in any real sense, but the potential and the danger, as this book illustrates, are all too obvious.

Potential is one thing — but how real is the danger? Is it really possible that one day a terrorist group will detonate a nuclear device or use biological or chemical weapons to slaughter indiscriminately? The answer is yes and there are valid reasons for saying so.

Terrorists motivated by religion are more likely to use a WMD (weapon of mass destruction) and the number of such groups is growing: "Religious groups committed only 25 per cent of the international terrorist incidents recorded in the Rand-St Andrew's chronology in 1995, but they were responsible for 58 per cent of the deaths."

In the short and medium terms the real threat probably comes from biological and chemical weapons. Witness the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyo who used the nerve agent Sarin to launch an attack on the Tokyo subway system in which they intended to kill many thousands of people. Despite crude technology, 12 people died and over 5,000 were injured. Most disturbingly at the time of the Tokyo attack, "Aum Shinrikyo had 50,000 members, assets worth £1.4 billion and offices in Bonn, Sri Lanka, New York and Moscow as well as in several Japanese cities". A taste of the future.

Terrorism, like any other "industry", is heavily influenced by what is thought to be successful. One incident involving biological or chemical weapons which produces a "result" for the terrorists might encourage other terrorists to overcome whatever restraints they possess about the use of such weapons.

Who are the people likeliest to resort to WMD? "As the new millennium approaches we face the very real increasing prospect that regional aggressors, third rate armies, terrorist groups and even religious cults will seek to wield disproportionate power by acquiring and using WMD" — Secretary of Defence William Cohen, 1997. Enough there to be getting on with.

So what can be done about it? The answer, in the medium to long term, is very little. The technology and motivation is there. It is simply a question of time. Border controls, restrictions on raw materials, detection devices and vaccines all have a role to play in combating the problem.

In the end, however, it will come down to what the intelligence agencies know about the terrorists and the determination of governments not to give in to blackmail. Jessica Stern understands that. She has written a valuable book that should serve as a timely warning about a potentially dreadful future.

Nicole Kidman and George Clooney in *The Peacemaker*: Kidman's character was apparently based on Jessica Stern

Not just Jewish stories, after all

RUTH SCURR

THE OXFORD BOOK OF JEWISH STORIES
Ed. Ilan Stavans
OUP, £20
ISBN 0 19 5110 19 6



These 52 short stories, originally written in Hebrew, Yiddish, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Russian, Polish or English, span the period 1860-1997. Among them is brilliant work from no fewer than six Nobel Prizewinners: Shmuel Yosef Agnon, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Elias Canetti, Saul Bellow, Elie Wiesel and Nadine Gordimer. This anthology is more than glittering: it's a reminder that anything — *anything* — is possible in a story.

In A. B. Yehoshua's *The Yati Evening Express*, villagers in the Gazeeb mountain range stage a train crash to bring excitement into their lives. The narrative powers towards its foreshadowed climax, linking character, action and atmosphere like so many cars in the ill-fated train. More experimental, Bruno Schulz fractures narrative in *The Street of Crocodiles*, an urban area where nothing ever reaches a definite conclusion. Beyond these examples it's possible to find every nuance of Modernism, along with so much that came before and after it, all in a single anthology. So what makes it Jewish?

Certain themes reverberate. The anti-Semitic violence described in Lamed Shapiro's pogrom story *The Kiss*, returns in a more comprehensively menacing form in the Holocaust stories. When Shachne refuses to kiss the hand of a yobbish peasant he is brutally beaten to death. But his suffering is as nothing compared to that of the woman in Cynthia Ozick's *The Shawl*, who tries to conceal and nourish her baby on the march to a Nazi death camp.

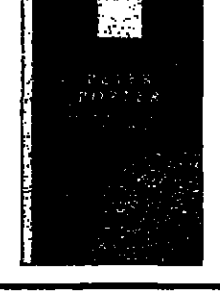
The tension between faith and secular scepticism is present in Rabbi Nakhman of Bratzlav's early 19th-century fables right through to Philip Roth's *The Conversion of the Jews*, when a suicidal boy on the synagogue roof refuses to come down until everyone will "promise, promise you'll never hit anyone about God".

The Oxford Book of Jewish Stories is confidently edited by Ilan Stavans, a writer and critic born in Mexico and educated at Yiddish schools. If his headnotes are sometimes vague about the date and language of original publication, they never fail to point out interesting connections between the writers included. Nothing could be more conducive to re-reading and further reading. His explicit editorial purpose is to present a "hierarchy of authors" valuable to the Jewish tradition. Many people are nervous of attempts to pin down the attributes of a "Jewish sensibility". But even those who reject the editor's intentions cannot fail to admire his achievement. Stavans has chosen stories that reflect both the power and the genuinely ambiguous nature of the Jewish tradition. "Although we are one people, each of us talks ten languages, and above all in the land of Israel."

Poet of sharp observations, with a keen outsider's eye

ROBERT NYE

COLLECTED POEMS
By Peter Porter
OUP, £30
ISBN 0 19 288097 7 and
ISBN 0 19 288098 5



Books of verse by Peter Porter have won most of the usual prizes. He has been hailed by his admirers as a modern Pope, a satirist in whose work we hear the echo of A Grand Style, the *inheritor of Auden's mantle*. He has also been dismissed as a journalist with a tin ear and a mind indissolubly linked to fashion.

Porter himself has declared that his work deals with "the art and life of the past and the everyday world of the present". He came to England from his native Australia in 1951, and his first two books, which were published by Scorpion Press in the early 1960s, made a strong impression which has not altogether faded, much of their power deriving from what is essentially an outsider's view of the follies of the time. These are satires *packed with all the things that* their writer hates: they are dandyish *in diction, hand-me-*down when it comes to both rhyme and rhythm, they are the observations of a provincial moralist on the loose in London.

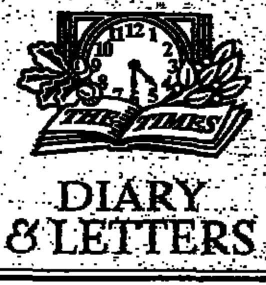
Later Porter is more oracular *and oblique, if never much* more involved. He writes a lot about the consolations of music, art and foreign travel, but always in a rather abstract way. One seldom gets the feeling that the verse has been compelled by more than a wish to write a poem. Thought gets replaced by rhetoric. As for feeling, it is conspicuous by its absence. Here is a writer who has made an art of avoiding whatever it was that first irked him into verse.

An exception must be made concerning *Exequy*, written in remembrance of his wife who died young. The tone of this — tender and self-accusing in the *same breath — is more person*al than anything otherwise to be found in Porter's work. Mention should also be made of his recreations of the Roman poet Martial, which are lively, and of a curious version of the story of Jonah *which he produced with* pictures by Arthur Boyd in 1973.

The Jonah text, however, does not appear in the two-volume *Collected Poems* which OUP offer as a boxed set in *honour of Porter's 70th* birthday. Everything else seems to be, including these lines which strike me as key Porter:

> After having written verses in tight corsets,
> verses inspired by German Idealism
> and random, thin, self-justifying verses
> I feel the need to trap a piece of real.

Try saying the last line aloud and you will find that its vowel sounds seem to demand an Australian accent. Note also that here he calls his own stuff verses and not poems. I reckon that's right. All of it is very clever and adroit, but it lacks that spark which turns words into fire.



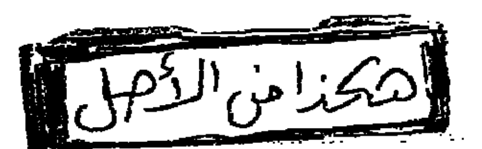
THE young hero of Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest* invented "an invaluable permanent invalid" called Bunbury to give him an irresistible excuse to slip off into the country. Did Wilde, perhaps, base Bunbury on a real Bunbury? A biography by Desmond Gregory is about to appear of one General Sir Henry Bunbury, a hero of the Napoleonic wars who was offered the post of secretary at war by the Prime Minister Lord Grey — but had to decline it because of his bad health (Associated University Presses).

ALTHOUGH Iris Murdoch did not want a memorial service, her publishers Chatto & Windus, her literary agent Ed Victor and the novelist Josephine Hart are giving a reception at which her friends can remember her. It will be held next Wednesday at the Royal Society of Literature. There will be no speeches, only private thoughts and conversations, which it is hoped Dame Iris would have liked rather better.

AS FOR correspondence — Andy Wyatt retorts to an unsisterly review of *The Whole Woman* (Books, March 4): "Germaine Greer being drubbed by Sarah Dunant as a crusty recusant from the feminism she helped to found smacks subtly of an even newer ideology — ageism. Dunant's suggestion is that, far from being The Whole Woman, the dried up old biddy has given up sex and so can have nothing further to say about it. She properly points out that *The Female Eunuch* was written by a young woman who spoke passionately to young women. But to complain about Greer now being an older woman writing as an older woman implies some regret that she is not set in aspic, endlessly repeating and reinforcing the shibboleths she helped to establish. The charge of "romantic Marxism" makes Greer's own point — new ideologies become corrupted with practice. Pity when it happens, of course, but GG was never one to reflect quietly and serenely like a Sophia come to wisdom. Just be grateful that she's still cross and feisty."

KATHERINE WATSON writes, too, to defend Nancy Sandars — original Penguin translator of *The Epic of Gilgamesh* against Peter Stothard's accusations of sogginess (Books, March 4). Her translation "has held the field, and on its own made Gilgamesh a familiar name. If there is now a sale for the £20 volume, it will be thanks to its modest predecessor." We are happy to reveal that *prose* and poetry versions will both be available as Penguin Classics when the paperback of Andrew George's translation appears early next year.

books@the-times.co.uk



BOOKS

What a girl learns at Beverly Hills High

Andrew Morton's version of *Monica's Story* is a tale of divorce, demands and depression — sound familiar?



Erica Wagner

I wonder if Daniel arap Moi has problems with low self-esteem? If he does, it would provide a unifying theme for Andrew Morton's *oeuvre*, which has otherwise focused on young women who suffer, in one form or another, from this peculiarly modern problem. He is the writer who has made it as easy for his readers to imagine the late Diana, Princess of Wales, standing in her socks in front of a refrigerator devouring pints of consolatory ice-cream as they might — perhaps more easily — picture his latest subject doing the same.

I write "peculiarly modern" advisedly; while I am quite certain that human beings through the ages have felt bad about themselves (who knows, perhaps even Scheherazade, anxious about the quality of her tales, felt moved to scoff secret scoops of sherbet), *Monica's Story* highlights the combination of LSE and a sense of entitlement which appears to characterise the Nineties version of angst. Monica Lewinsky tells Andrew Morton about her first affair with a married man, a schmo called Andy Bleiler who was a drama technician at her high school — Beverly Hills High, of course. What drove her into his arms? "Looking back it was just a lack of self-worth, of thinking that I did not deserve anything better. Deep inside I didn't think I was good enough to have a full relationship. It was a very painful and raw time for me," she tells Morton.

Privileged childhood, parents acrimoniously divorced, a relationship with a man who is — for reasons social or emotional — somehow unavailable. Disaster. This seems to be a story we are happy to hear over and over — it's the reason we can never get enough of Monica, no matter how much we claim we've had it up to here with her. But then who are the thousands of people who bought the paperback of the Starr report (when it was already available free on the Net)? Who enabled Monica — now ensconced in the ranks of single-name celebrities — to scrawl her signature eight times a minute at Harrods on Monday? All those people who find her story the flip side of the fairytales where the princess gets her handsome prince. "There's part of me that really wants to go and see her," said an elegant friend of mine whom I would never have pegged for a Monica maven. As she spoke her eyes widened with horror at herself. "It's like wanting to go and see a freak show."

Poor Monica: a freak show. Yet reading Andrew Morton's book makes it impossible to think poor Monica. Monica — for all her "lack of self-worth" — never thinks it. Speaking to Jan Moir in New York she told the journalist that only now, on her own book tour, did she understand why the President had not paid her the attention she felt she deserved. "I don't even have *meetings* on top of [my schedule]," she said. "And he had to do this every day, all the time."

That's the sense of entitlement that makes Monica's story, and *Monica's Story*, problematic and emblematic. This tale has always been about the imposition of the ridiculous upon the sublime (all right, more often it's been about the imposition of the ridiculous on the ridiculous) and the juxtapositions in Morton's book are bizarre. Of course we've had them in the Starr report — that blow-job while he was on the phone! — but we haven't had them in Andrew Morton's ferociously straight-faced, unctuously sympathetic prose. The date is January 21, 1996; "Handsome" is struggling with international affairs, "Kiddo" with the perils of having a bad hair day in the Oval Office. "Smiling gently, he put his arm around her . . . He was in pain not only physically — he suffers from chronic back problems — but emotionally: that day, he had received news of the first killing of an American serviceman in Bosnia. So while he and Monica once more indulged in their form of making out, it was an emotional occasion for both of them, particularly for the President, who, as Commander-in-Chief of all US forces, was feeling his heavy responsibilities especially keenly."

OK, perhaps he was. What Monica was feeling was that because (and this is reiterated throughout the book) she saw him "as a man and not just as the President" he should have picked up the phone and called her a little more. He should have given her a job in the White House, stopped "the meanies" from banishing her to the Pentagon. Early on in the book, Morton refers perceptively to Monica's tendency to "see life as an unfolding movie script": in the movie the girl would get the guy. I saw *The American President* too, and while I may not have a thing for Michael Douglas I did come out feeling that a night of passion in the Executive Mansion wouldn't be such bad news . . . at least I felt that until the lights came up.

But for Monica — for all the Monicas — the lights are always dimmed and the opening music is always fading, the real show is always just about to start. In the beginning was the American Dream, and the American Dream said: you can have anything your heart desires. It's yours by right.

Guess what? You can't. It isn't.

MONICA'S STORY
By Andrew Morton
Michael O'Mara, £16.99
ISBN 1 85479 426 4

A good cigar is a smoke

Women deserve better than this, says **Marianne Wiggins**

WOMAN
An Intimate Geography
By Natalie Angier
Little, Brown, £17.99
ISBN 1 86049 685 7

Natalie Angier writes a column for *The New York Times*, where her sassy takes on what the United States calls "popular science" have won her America's leading journalism award, the Pulitzer Prize.

Endowed more than 50 years ago by the publishing tycoon Joseph Pulitzer, the prize which bears his name has come to be synonymous not only with excellence in all categories of writing but with courage and clarity of thought. Sadly, like too many formerly idealised institutions in America's culture, the Pulitzer, too, has apparently been debased, if the quality of thought and writing on display in *Woman* can serve as a yardstick.

Perhaps it was inevitable that the culture that invented Pop Art would spawn pop everything — pop science, pop politics, pop Pultizers. When Andy Warhol predicted everybody could be famous for 15 minutes, he failed to foresee the future's spin on that pattern of fast fame. As the so-called celebrity of any woman whose life and limb the current President has touched will illustrate, "celebrity" ain't worth much in America these days. Anybody can be famous for 15 minutes. That's what Monica Lewinsky and television shows hosted by Ricki Lake and Jerry Springer go to prove. What counts isn't fame or the achievement of a Pulitzer. What counts is cashing in on it.

Without the gloss of the Pulitzer, Miss Angier's lacklustre writing would command as much authority as the latest sad case on today's TV confessional. One has to believe that the only reason this bash of a book has come into print is because of Miss Angier's credentials. Let's hope that she cashes in with this book and never has to write another one. This one reads as if Miss Angier dictated it all in one go while, say, doing her pelvic floor exercises. In a chapter about the physiology of the vagina, she confides: "But, gals, there's no denying it: sometimes we stink, and we know it. Not like strawberry yogurt or a good Cabernet but like, alas, albacore. Or even skunk. How does this happen? If you haven't bathed for a week, I'll let you figure it out for yourself."

Such is the level of Miss Angier's scientific instruction. Chapter by ill-conceived chapter, we gals are anatomised, led down the aisles of our own bodies as if through a dark cinema with Miss Angier serving as usherette, focusing her fuzzy light on femalism, feminism's most recent mutation — the idea that the case for woman's superiority over man is proven by the natural superiority of her antomical design and engineering. Ovaries, menstruation, female aggression, orgasm and breasts each get a chapter in Angier's misnamed "geography". There's more science and cartography in a cheese wrapper than in Angier's lame-brained version of the female form.

But it's on the subject of the female breast that Angier proves that there's never any low that's low enough in the endless process of a culture's dumbing-down: "Still, mysteriously, we have curves and we are drawn to curves," she writes, "and to those who wave them in our faces. We are drawn to rounded breasts and rounded muscles. We are drawn to prominent cheekbones, those facial breasts, or are they facial buttocks, or miniceps, or apples, or faces within faces?"

Good grief. I trust her facial buttocks are burning with embarrassment. What a load of duodenal face cream.

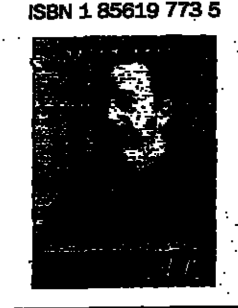
PHOTONICA

Learning curve: Natalie Angier's improbable explanation of why we are attracted to rounded forms compares prominent cheekbones to buttocks

Only Germans could prove a match for him

ROGER SCRUTON

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS
A Life
By Brian Rees
Chatto & Windus, £30
ISBN 1 85619 773 5



Camille Saint-Saëns died in 1921, at the ripe old age of 86, crowned with all the honours that governments, academies and musicians had the power to bestow. It seemed inconceivable that the man who wrote *Sampson et Dalilah*, the Second Piano Concerto and the 3rd Symphony (the Organ Symphony) should ever be demoted from the musical Pantheon, or that his influence, as a teacher, a critic, and an exponent of the tonal language, should one day be deplored.

It was Saint-Saëns's misfortune, however, to live too long, so as to overlap with the Modernists. Moreover, he retained his creativity, his sharp intelligence and his polemical gift to the end. Not only did he represent the tradition against which Debussy and Stravinsky were in open rebellion: he also spoke for it. He was the Grand Old Man whom every rebel hopes for, the articulate spokesman for things which will soon be dead, and himself along with them.

By the time I encountered his name, in the late 1950s, Saint-Saëns was known for little besides the *Carnival of the Animals* and the *Danse Macabre*, pieces that would appear too frequently on *Desert Island Discs* to merit serious attention. Opera buffs loved *Mon coeur ouvre à ta voix* from *Sampson et Dalilah*, but the sneerers were quick to point out that its most compelling phrase was lifted from a song by Schubert. As for the concertos and the Organ Symphony, my contemporaries dismissed them as late-Romantic curiosities, remarkable only for their emotionless expertise.

Since then, the censorious reign of the Modernists has ended, and it is no longer regarded as a sign of incurable philistinism to value music that is more brilliant than original. In the account of his early years that he published in old age, Saint-Saëns wrote that "For me, music is an art which has its laws, its grammar and syntax" — and without these, he added, the pursuit of atmosphere is of no musical force. Looking at his vast output, one could say that Saint-Saëns's grasp of tonal syntax served him well — for he could compose fluently, endlessly and charmingly in any medium — and also ill, since it led to his being dismissed (unjustly) as an "academic" composer.

One by one, however, his masterpieces are being recuperated — the Organ Symphony, the concertos for piano, cello and violin and the chamber music. As for the operas, apart from *Sampson et Dalilah*, they have yet to be seriously revived; and the descriptions given by Brian Rees (who devotes much of his painstaking biography to an account of the music) suggest that they might well be left to gather dust in the archive.

Saint-Saëns lived through one of the most interesting periods of French history. But his life was as unexciting as Modernists find his music. Nor does Brian Rees, despite immense labours of research, impart vey much lustre to it. A child prodigy, who was playing and composing in his fifth year, Saint-Saëns entered the world of music through an open door. He had every gift a musician could hope for, sight-reading symphonic scores with the rapidity of Liszt and improvising with the competence of Mozart.

Brought up by his widowed mother, he sought in music for a fatherly authority that had been denied him in life. He escaped unharmed from all the major conflicts of 19th-century France, married in middle age, and mixed with the established authors, painters and composers of his day, recognised by all as the possessor of a talent so phenomenal that only Germans could prove a match for him. The one tragedy in his life — the death of his two sons in infancy — was so enormous that he could never refer to it or encompass it in music, and the suggestion that would make him most interesting to a prurient modern reader — that he was an active homosexual — remains an unsubstantiated rumour. Without in any way denigrating Brian Rees, I cannot help remarking that Saint-Saëns justifies the view that biographies should be no longer than Plutarch's, and that they should aim at the essence, rather than the accidents, of the victim.

That view is mine. Readers of biographies do not, in general, seem to share it. Therefore let me recommend, to those who are interested in Saint-Saëns, this worthy and literate testimony to his greatness. It will remind them that France had a Romantic culture second to none in Europe, that the most important musical representative of that culture lived well into our century, and — most astonishing of all — that his widow *died in my lifetime*. Makes you fink.

The waste land that was Beirut

JAMES EVE

UNREAL CITY
By Tony Hanania
Bloomsbury, £17.99
ISBN 0 7475 4291 0



Tony Hanania's second novel takes its title from a phrase at the dark centre of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. The poet's apocalyptic vision fits Hanania's portrait of his native Beirut: "Cracks and reforms and burst in the violet air/ Falling towers/ Jerusalem Athens Alexandria/ Vienna London/ Unreal." Both writers chart the collapse of a civilisation and the search for meaning in the aftermath.

Unreal City is ambitious, spanning the period from the 1970s, before the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war, to the early 1990s, after the defeat of the Christian militias. The young narrator moves between England, where he is educated, and Lebanon, his homeland. His search for an ex-lover — a Palestinian refugee, Layla — takes him back to Beirut. On each return the city draws closer to anarchy.

Paradoxically, Beirut is the most real thing in the novel. Its death is described in images of freakish intensity, while human beings are as insubstantial as ghosts. We never discover the narrator's name, and even Layla is a shadowy presence. When the narrator's search for Layla fails, he turns to fundamentalism and — rather unconvincingly — joins the terrorist group, Hezbollah: his detachment makes such a commitment seem unlikely. He returns to England *to* trace a blasphemous writer, clearly based on Salman Rushdie.

Hanania has written a timely book. His treatment of the fatwa on Rushdie has already sparked a debate in *al-Hayat*, and his portrayal of Hezbollah coincides with recent media images of Galileans sleeping in bomb shelters after being threatened with shelling by Lebanese guerrillas.

Occasionally Hanania addresses the breakdown of Beirut with a wider perspective. Before the war the narrator's friend Harun earns money by telling tourists about "the marvel that was Sidon". Once a great Levantine seaport, Sidon was invaded by Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Turks. Little remains. Like Athens and Alexandria in *The Waste Land*, Sidon succumbed to historical cycles of growth and decay. Its fate is echoed by Beirut, and in his minute descriptions of its changes, Hanania proves himself the prose poet of disintegration, of the tearing apart of a society's fabric.



Salvaged from the depths

AN OPERATIONAL NECESSITY
By Gwyn Griffin
Harvill, £10.99
ISBN 1 86046 596 X

IT IS 1945. A German U-boat captain orders the floating survivors of a freighter he has torpedoed to be machinegunned because he believes that the safety of his own boat depends on destroying all traces of the attack. Shifting effortlessly from the broken bodies floating in the wreckage to the action aboard the submarine, Gwyn Griffin provides periscopic insight into the paradoxes of war. The courtroom scene at the end — worthy of John Grisham — deserves a special mention. First published in 1968, this new edition from Harvill rekindles the work of an author who will be remembered as both accomplished storyteller and Second World War veteran.

Chops for tea

THE INVESTIGATION
By Juan José Saer
Serpent's Tail, £9.99
ISBN 1 85242 297 1

A MURDERER courts elderly Parisian ladies, inviting himself over for dinner to ply them with liquor and cheap affection. After the conversational aperitif he chops them into pieces and carefully arranges said parts in formations on a platter. While Chief Inspector Morvan, the officer in charge of the police investigation, tries to find a crack in the "*recherché* perfectionism" of the monster's crimes, an untitled manuscript by an unnamed author is discovered in Argentina. *The Investigation* seeks to unravel both cases. José Saer, a leading Argentine writer of the post-Borges generation now living in Paris, is detailed without being gruesome.

Buried gems

CHEATIN' HEART
Women's Secret Stories
Edited by Kim Longinotto and Joanna Rosenthall
Serpent's Tail, £8.99
ISBN 1 85242 555 5

IT SOUNDS like the title of a *My Guy* photo story, but there is not a speech bubble in sight in *Cheatin' Heart* — just excellent writing by women. The editors have uncovered secret stories by accomplished writers such as Janette Turner Hospital, Amy Bloom and Rose Tremain. Tremain's *Dinner For One*, the tale of elderly couple, Lal and Henry, who have been married for 50 years, and a gay restaurateur, Larry, who is dumped by the love of his life, is especially touching. Using simple language, Tremain is there at the sinking of one flighty and one lifelong relationship, getting a heart-rending snap as they go under together.

ALEX O'CONNELL

IN metro THIS SATURDAY
The Prime Minister likes *The Lord of the Rings*, Liam Gallagher prefers *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*: why grown-ups enjoy children's books

Court of Appeal

Law Report March 11 1999

Court of Appeal

Grazing rights can be sold separately

Bettison and Another v Langton and Others

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Ward and Lord Justice Robert Walker

[Judgment February 19]

Grazing rights attached to a property could, if quantified in terms of a specific number of animals, be sold separately without the property so as to become a freestanding right.

The Court of Appeal so stated, inter alia, when dismissing an appeal by the second and third defendants, Wilfred and Heather Penter, from an order of Judge Anthony Thompson, QC, at Bodmin County Court on January 22, 1998 whereby he made a declaration as to title sought by the first and second plaintiffs, Stephen and Caroline Bettison, and dismissed the counterclaim, for a different declaration as to title, made by the second and third defendants.

Mr Vivian Chapman, who did not appear below, for the second and third defendants; Mr Leslie Blohm, who did not appear below, for the plaintiffs; Mrs Jacqueline Langton, first defendant, in person.

LORD JUSTICE ROBERT WALKER said that the appeal raised questions of some complexity, and of some general interest to the rural community, as to ancient rights of common and the effect on them of twentieth century legislation, especially the Commons Registration Act 1965. Tawna Down was in the parish of Cardinham in Cornwall, a few miles north-east of Bodmin and on the edge of Bodmin Moor. In its lee there were several farms including Sina Farm. In 1968 Sina Farm consisted of a farmhouse, outbuildings and about 38 acres of small fields.

Mrs Langton who owned Sina Farm made two sales, the first, in 1987, to Mr and Mrs Bettison and the second, in 1994, to Mr and Mrs Penter.

The Bettisons said that the first sale, of grazing rights, was effective, even though there was no simultaneous sale of any part of Sina Farm itself, and that thereafter Mrs Langton had no grazing rights left to sell to anyone else.

The Penters said that the purported sale of grazing rights on their own was a nullity, that the grazing rights remained with Mrs Langton, and that part of the rights passed to them in 1994 when they bought the farmhouse and about 25 acres of the fields of Sina Farm from Mrs Langton's mortgagee.

The Bettisons had applied immediately to the Cornwall County Council, the registration authority under the 1965 Act, for an amendment of the rights section of the register. But their application seemed to have been shelved and it had still not been dealt with when the Penters also made an application for registration.

The county council had since 1996 taken the attitude that the matter must be resolved by the court, if the rival applicants could not resolve it by agreement.

The first main issue was whether a profit of grazing, or pasture, appurtenant to a particular property was capable of being granted away from that property so as to become a profit in gross, that is, freestanding. That had been discussed in textbooks for over 300 years.

With one modern exception, and with varying degrees of confidence and explanation, the textbooks expressed a view unfavourable to Mr and Mrs Penter. It was common ground that there was no single reliably reported case in which the resolution of the issue had actually been necessary to the decision.

The issue was one which, although involving some very old law expressed in archaic terminology, was still of general importance, especially to those engaged in animal husbandry in upland areas of England and Wales where rights of common were still important to the rural economy.

Mr Chapman submitted that an incorporeal right which was by its name and nature appurtenant to a piece of corporeal land must necessarily remain inseverably annexed to it. Severance by grant of the right to someone who was not also the grantee of the corporeal land would be, he said, a contradiction in terms.

Mr Blohm submitted that a profit appurtenant for a certain and limited number of animals was capable of severance by grant, and thereupon became a profit in gross.

There was, he said, no contradiction in terms or in principle: the right was appurtenant until it was severed, and on severance it became a right in gross, that is, a freestanding right.

The judge held that where appurtenant rights of grazing were limited to a specific number, they were alienable, because there was not any possible prejudice to the owner of the common.

He then went on to hold, and that was the other main issue in the appeal, that the effect of the 1965 Act was to bring to an end levancy and couchancy [the principle which meant that the number of animals which one could turn out to graze was limited by the capacity of the arable land to support them during winter], and to replace it by a system requiring the registration of rights for fixed numbers of animals.

Mr Chapman had argued that the judge was wrong on both issues. On the first issue he submitted that the judge's decision was

(i) contrary to principle, and in particular fallacious in supposing there could be no prejudice to the owner of the common if the rights were numerically quantified;

(ii) not compelled by binding authority; and

(iii) inconsistent with section 187(1) of the Law of Property Act 1925.

As to the first point, it was clear beyond argument that a profit in gross, unlike an easement in gross, was a well recognised type of incorporeal hereditament, not an anomalous exception.

There was no obvious reason in principle why a profit appurtenant should not become a profit in gross, if its scope was quantified otherwise than by reference to the needs of the property to which it was annexed.

His Lordship could readily accept that if rights of common for a fixed number of animals were freely alienable, that would in practice make it less likely that they would fall into disuse: market forces would tend to bring the rights into the ownership of those who would make best use of them.

But that was one of the reasons underlying the law's general policy of favouring alienability over inalienability, where it could. The lord of the manor or his successor might have less prospect of seeing the exercise of rights of common dwindling, but that did not amount to prejudice to his legal rights.

Mr Chapman also put forward a policy argument based on the need for commoners to cooperate in a spirit of give and take: that spirit might, he suggested, be lost as a result of the intrusion of strangers.

But if rights of common were alienable the most likely purchasers would be other commoners with growing herds or flocks, as the Bettisons appeared to be, although there was no finding about that. Moreover, strangers might buy upland farms as holiday homes.

His Lordship did not think that those rather speculative considerations could be given any weight.

As to the second point, Mr Blohm conceded that there was no reported case, ancient or modern, which clearly decided the issue in such a way as to constitute a binding precedent.

Nevertheless, the preponderance of authority both in reported cases and in classic textbooks appeared to his Lordship to support the view that an appurtenant profit of grazing, if limited to a fixed number of animals, could be granted separately so as to become a profit in gross.

In his Lordship's judgment, the cumulative effect of that authority, even if it was not strictly binding, was so powerful that it should be followed, especially where the general policy of the law, in case of doubt, was to favour property being freely transferable.

Section 187 of the 1925 Act provided: "(1) Where an easement, right or privilege for a legal estate is created, it shall enure for the benefit of the land to which it is intended to be annexed." That provision was new and was in Part XI of the Act, headed "Miscellaneous".

No guidance as to its legislative purpose could be derived from its surroundings or from the notes in *Wolstenholme and Cherry's Conveyancing Statutes* (13th edition (1972) volume 1, p312).

In the period of nearly three-quarters of a century in which it had been in force it had never, it seemed, been commented on or explained in any reported case.

His Lordship found it a very obscure provision.

It must have been intended to clarify some supposed doubt or to fill some supposed gap in the law, but the precise nature of the doubt or gap was a matter of conjecture.

But whatever the true explanation, his Lordship found it inconceivable that Parliament intended by those obscure words, directed as they were primarily to easements rather than profits, to change the law as to the severance of profits, especially as rights of common were expressly referred to, although in connection with public access to commons, in two other sections in Part XI, sections 193 and 194.

Lord Justice Simon Brown and Lord Justice Ward agreed.

Solicitors: Edward Harris & Son, Swansea; Daniell & Battell, Camborne.

Suing on will without rectification

Horsfall and Another v Haywards (a Firm)

Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Mummery and Lord Justice Buxton

[Judgment February 18]

Intended beneficiaries under a negligently drafted will were not obliged to issue rectification proceedings to mitigate their loss, and to exhaust that remedy before suing the solicitor for negligence, if in fact there was no prospect of the rectification proceedings resulting in any material recovery of the funds lost.

The Court of Appeal so held when dismissing an appeal by the defendant solicitors, Haywards, of Stowmarket, Suffolk, from the decision of Mr Justice Evans-Lombe, sitting in the High Court at Norwich on November 27, 1997, who ordered them to pay £87,503.17 in damages for professional negligence to the plaintiffs, Miss Jennifer Horsfall and Mrs Violet Ruth Powell.

The damages represented the full value of a beneficial interest in a remainder in Mill House, Wickham Skeith, Eye, Suffolk and contents, formerly owned by Ronald Horsfall, deceased, the testator.

He had intended to leave the house in trust for his wife, Mrs Maud Horsfall, for life, with remainder to the plaintiffs, his two nieces, in equal shares. But under the terms of his will as drafted by Mr Christopher Landin of the defendant firm, the house became the absolute property of the testator's widow and the plaintiffs had no entitlement to any beneficial interest in it.

After the testator's death, Mrs Horsfall, who was a Canadian citizen, decided to return to Canada. She gave the first plaintiff, who was also her co-executrix of the testator's will, a power of attorney to conduct her affairs in England. The house was sold and the proceeds of sale transmitted to Mrs Horsfall in Canada.

The first plaintiff did not play an active part in the administration of the estate and did not understand what rights were conferred upon her under the will.

It was only later that she became concerned that her interest under the will might not materialise. Initially, both plaintiffs had been mainly concerned not to upset Mrs Horsfall, and to help her establish herself in Canada.

It was common ground before the judge that the solicitors owed a duty of care to the plaintiffs as well as to the testator to draft the will in accordance with the testator's intentions, and that in misdrafting the will the solicitors had acted in breach of that duty.

The court was solely concerned with the assessment of damages, which the judge based on the net value of the house, subject to a continuing life interest in favour of the widow, without reduction.

The main ground of the solicitors' appeal was that the plaintiffs were precluded from claiming against them by their failure to mitigate their loss, in particular by failing to bring a claim to vary the provisions of the trust by rectification under section 20 of the Administration of Justice Act 1982.

Section 20 provided:

"(1) If a court is satisfied that a will is so expressed that it fails to carry out the testator's intentions, in consequence (a) of a clerical error; or (b) of a failure to understand his instructions, it may order that the will shall be rectified so as to carry out his intentions.

"(2) An application for an order under this section shall not, except with the permission of the court, be made after the end of the period of six months from the date on which representation with respect to the estate of the deceased is first taken out."

Ms Teresa Rosen Peacocke for the solicitors; Miss Caroline Purze for the plaintiffs.

LORD JUSTICE MUMMERY said the plaintiffs were under a duty to take all reasonable steps to mitigate the loss suffered by them consequent on the solicitors' breach of duty.

They were not entitled to claim any part of the damage which was due to their neglect to take such steps. The question was, what would a reasonable plaintiff have done in the circumstances?

As a general rule, it was not the duty of the injured party "to embark on litigation in order to mitigate the damage suffered," and so "protect his solicitor from the consequences of his own carelessness": see *Pilkington v Wood* ([1953] Ch 770, 776, 777).

Notwithstanding that general rule, the Court of Appeal held in *Walker v Geo H. Medlicott & Son (a Firm)* (*The Times* November 26, 1998) that, in a case of alleged negligent drafting of a will, the courts could reasonably expect the plaintiff to mitigate his damage by bringing proceedings for rectification of the will, if available, and to exhaust that remedy before considering bringing proceedings for negligence against the solicitor.

It was obvious that the application of the standard of reasonableness to the steps to be taken in mitigation was capable of producing different outcomes according to the circumstances of the case. No general rule could be expected to cover all cases.

In *Walker v Medlicott* the solicitor denied negligence and asserted that he had drafted the will in accordance with his client's instructions. The evidence on both sides would have been the same on that issue in both the rectification and the negligence proceedings.

There was no reason why the plaintiff could not have brought rectification proceedings in time before he instituted the negligence action. If he had succeeded in rectifying the will, there would be no need for him to sue the solicitor, save to recover the costs of the rectification.

In the present case, there was no evidence before the judge that Mr Landin had misunderstood the testator's instructions within section 20(1)(b) or that the will contained a clerical error within section 20(1)(a) of the 1982 Act.

Even if, which the judge doubted, the rectification proceedings had been likely to succeed, they would not have resulted in any material recovery of the funds to compensate the plaintiffs for the loss of their interest under the will.

The question was whether the plaintiffs failed to take reasonable steps to mitigate their loss. Under section 20(2), rectification proceedings had to be brought within six months of the grant of probate.

Both before and after that date, the position was that the first plaintiff was co-executrix of the will with Mrs Maud Horsfall, as well as having power of attorney for her.

Both plaintiffs, as well as Mrs Horsfall, relied on Mr Landin, who acted as solicitor in the administration of the estate, to deal with matters affecting the estate appropriately.

There was no evidence that he gave any advice about the possibility of rectifying the will or about the inadvisability of sending the proceeds of sale of the house to Canada.

It was reasonable for the plaintiffs to assume that there was nothing to be concerned about and that their interests would materialise in due course. By the time they became concerned, it was too late: the capital had been made available to Mrs Horsfall in Canada and the time limit for rectification proceedings had expired.

The appeal should be dismissed.

Lord Justice Buxton and Lord Justice Hirst agreed.

Solicitors: Mills & Reeve, Norwich; Greene & Greene, Bury St Edmunds.

Differential insurance premium tax unlawful

Regina v Commissioners of Customs and Excise, Ex parte Lunn Poly Ltd and Another

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Schiemann and Lord Justice Clarke

[Judgment February 26]

The provisions of the Finance Act 1997 which introduced differential rates of insurance premium tax on travel insurance, whereby contracts sold by independent insurance companies attracted a lower rate than those sold by or through tour operators or travel agents, constituted state aid within article 92 of the EC Treaty and were illegal in absence of notification to and clearance by the European Commission pursuant to article 93(3).

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment dismissing the Crown's appeal against the decision of the Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Kennedy and Mr Justice Maurice Kay) (*The Times* April 8, 1998) granting a declaration to the applicants, Lunn Poly Ltd, a travel agent and part of the Thomson Travel Group, and Bishopsgate Insurance Ltd, a specialist travel insurer selling policies mainly through travel agents, and part of a group ultimately owned by a Dutch company.

Mr Paul Lasok, QC and Mr Aidan Robertson for the Crown; Mr Gerald Barling, QC and Mr James Flynn for the applicants.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS said that section 21 of the Finance Act 1997 had amended section 51 of the Finance Act 1994 by replacing a previous uniform rate of 2.5 per cent insurance premium tax with two rates: a standard rate of 4 per cent and a higher rate of 17.5 per cent on certain travel insurance contracts: see section 51A of the 1994 Act, as inserted by section 22 of the 1997 Act.

The general effect of Schedule 6A(4) to the 1994 Act, as inserted by section 22 of the 1997 Act, was to make the premiums on travel insurance arranged by tour operators, travel agents or the like subject to the higher rate. If the contract of insurance was arranged by anyone else such as an independent insurance company the lower rate was payable.

The applicants argued that those paying insurance premium tax at the lower rate were receiving a state aid because the United Kingdom was forgoing the difference between the higher rate tax and the lower rate tax in the case of those not subject to the higher rate.

If a provision in national legislation conflicted with a requirement of the EC Treaty, it was the responsibility of the domestic courts to provide a remedy if the provision which was contravened was of direct effect.

The requirement in article 93(3) [that a member state should notify and obtain clearance from the European Commission before implementing measures of state aid] was of direct effect.

Whether there had been a contravention of that requirement could be determined only if the court decided for itself whether or not the matters complained of constituted an aid which should have been notified to the Commission.

Ultimately the court had to ask itself the global question whether the matters complained of constituted (i) an aid, (ii) granted by a member state or through state resources in any form whatsoever which (iii) distorted or threatened to distort competition and (iv) which affected trade between member states.

However, it was convenient in the first instance to concentrate on the question whether what was complained of constituted an "aid".

The Crown had contended that if what was involved was objectively justifiable, then what was complained of could not amount to an aid or at least could not amount to conduct which was incompatible with the Common Market.

It was necessary to focus on the effect the introduction of the differential rate of tax had had on the previous position in order to decide whether the change in the rates constituted an aid. In doing that his Lordship did not observe from the authorities any suggestion that it was not permissible to look at the reason the member state put forward for imposing the differential rate. Not to do so was to approach the issues in a vacuum.

It was here that the question of there being an objective justification for the implementation of the measure could be relevant.

The Crown had justified the different rates on the basis that they were introduced to avoid the loss of revenue as a result of value shifting.

The price and profit structure of the travel industry as reflected in and facilitated by the tour operator's brochure prices, was one of low margins on holidays and high margins on the related travel insurance.

Travel insurance was sold by the travel industry at much higher charges than those made by the non-travel industry for similar insurance. The position was similar with regard to tour operators who did not seek to undercut the high insurance prices charged by travel agents.

However, the Crown had also been compelled to acknowledge that the applicants discounted the cost of the holidays and it had accepted that that point-of-sale value shifting did not result in a tax loss.

In his Lordship's judgment, the Crown's reasoning did not justify the difference in rates.

All it had succeeded in demonstrating was that the demand for travel insurance was highly price inelastic.

That enabled travel agents, in particular, to charge their customers a premium which they should find uncompetitive. They did not do so because they were guided by factors other than price when making their purchasing decision on insurance.

There was no loss of tax which provided an objective justification for the discriminatory rate of tax imposed on tour operators and agents providing insurance. The higher rate could not be objectively justified as an anti-tax avoidance measure.

While, when considering the justification for the different rates of tax, the courts should allow the authorities a margin of freedom for the exercise of their judgment, the decision of the Divisional Court on that aspect of the case could not be faulted.

The Crown had submitted that there was no state aid here because the higher rate applied to the generality of taxpayers.

However, it was not right that there could only be a state aid in relation to an individual undertaking. Where one body of taxpayers received a benefit which another body of taxpayers did not receive, that discrimination was capable of constituting a state aid.

Those providing travel insurance, who were not subject to the higher rate of tax, were a clearly defined part of the group providing travel insurance and they had received a benefit in the form of a lower tax rate which another defined part of those providing travel insurance, namely the travel operators and travel agents, had not received. The aid was both specific and selective.

To contravene article 92 the aid must also both distort or threaten to distort competition and affect trade between member states. In relation to those requirements, the Divisional Court had made the necessary findings and had been entitled to do so.

Lord Justice Schiemann agreed and Lord Justice Clarke gave a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Solicitor, Customs and Excise; Norton Rose.

Amending order for appeal

Infante v Rai-Radiotelevisione Italiana SpA

Since an appeal lay only against an order of the court and not against a finding in a reasoned judgment, it was incumbent upon an appellant to ensure, if necessary by application to the court, that the order be amended to reflect the decision against which he proposed to appeal.

Lord Justice Beldam, so held in the Court of Appeal on February 19 in refusing an extension of time for the plaintiff, Giancarlo Infante, to appeal against an order made by Judge Astill, sitting as a High Court judge, on March 1, 1996, and amended on November 23, 1998, whereby he ruled that the plaintiff's dismissal by his employers, Rai-Radiotelevisione Italiana SpA, had been lawful.

The judge had given separate judgments on the merits and on costs, but the original order only dealt with costs. The ruling of the lawfulness of the plaintiff's dismissal was added by amendment.

LORD JUSTICE BELDAM, having referred to *Lake v Lake* ([1955] P 336), said that a solicitor faced with the question whether an order made in the court below was susceptible of appeal should, after the lapse of a reasonable period, either apply to put the matter before the court or go back to the judge and ask him to amend his order so that an appeal could proceed.

In this case, far too much time was allowed to elapse before the order was amended and the other reasons for delay did not justify an extension of time.

Human Rights Law Report

Strasbourg

Court-martial proceedings do not ensure fair trial

Hood v United Kingdom

(Application No 27267/95)

Before L. Wildhaber, President and Judges E. Palm, L. Ferrari Bravo, P. Kuris, J-P. Costa, W. Fuhrmann, K. Jungwiert, M. Fischbach, B.Zupancic, N. Vajic, J. Hedigan, W. Thomassen, M.Tsatsa-Nikolovska, T. Pantiru, E. Levits, K. Traja, and Judge ad hoc Sir John Freeland.

Deputy Registrar P. Mahoney

[Judgment February 18]

The European Court of Human Rights held unanimously that there had been a violation of article 5.3 and 5.5 (right to liberty) and article 6.1 (right to a fair trial) of the European Convention on Human Rights with respect to court-martial proceedings brought against the applicant.

Article 5 of the Convention provides:

"1 Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be deprived of his liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law ... (c) the lawful arrest or detention of a person effected for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority on reasonable suspicion of having committed an offence or when it is reasonably considered necessary to prevent him committing an offence or fleeing after having done so;...

"3 Everyone arrested or detained in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1(c) of this article shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power...

"4 Everyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings by which the lawfulness of his detention shall be decided speedily by a court and his release ordered if the detention is not lawful.

"5 Everyone who has been a victim of arrest or detention in contravention of the provisions of this article shall have an enforceable right to compensation."

Article 6 provides:

"1 In the determination of ... any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing ... by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law...

"3 Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights ... (c) to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for his legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require..."

The applicant, Mr David Hood, a British national, was born in 1970 and lived in the United Kingdom.

In 1995 he was tried and convicted under the Army Act 1955 by court-martial on a number of charges of a criminal nature. He had been detained prior to his court-martial following a decision by his commanding officer and the applicant unsuccessfully pursued domestic habeas corpus proceedings in that respect.

Central to the court-martial system under the 1955 Act was the role of the "convening officer" who, inter alia, was responsible for convening the court-martial and appointing its members and the prosecuting officer.

The convening officer had the final decision on the nature and detail of the charges to be brought, and a plea to a lesser charge could not be accepted from the accused without his or her consent.

In certain circumstances, the convening officer could dissolve the court-martial either before or during the trial, and, since he or she usually also acted as confirming officer, the court-martial's findings were not effective until confirmed by him or her.

Under the 1955 Act, and the rules and regulations made thereunder, an accused's commanding officer initially decided on the necessity for the pre-trial detention of an accused.

The application to the European Commission of Human Rights, which was lodged on April 18, 1995, was declared partly admissible on December 1, 1997.

Having attempted unsuccessfully to secure a friendly settlement, the Commission adopted a report on May 28, 1998 in which it established the facts and expressed the unanimous opinion that there had been a violation of articles 5.3, 5.5 and 6.1.

The Government of the United Kingdom brought the case before the Court.

Under the transitional provisions of Protocol No 11 to the Convention, the case was transmitted to the Grand Chamber of the new European Court of Human Rights on the entry into force of the Protocol, on November 1, 1998.

In its judgment, the European Court of Human Rights held:

I Alleged violation of article 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 of the Convention

The applicant complained under article 5.3 and 5.5 about his detention prior to his court-martial by a decision of his commanding officer.

With regard to the applicant's pre-trial detention, the Court recalled, inter alia, its judgment in *Huber v Switzerland* (October 23, 1990, Series A No 188) where it found that, if the officer authorised by law to decide on the pre-trial detention of an accused was liable to intervene later in the proceedings as a representative of the prosecuting authority, then that officer could not be regarded as being independent of the parties at the time the decision on the accused's pre-trial detention was taken.

Having found that the commanding officer was liable to play a central role in the later prosecution of the case against the applicant, the Court concluded that the applicant's misgivings about his commanding officer's impartiality were objectively justified.

It also considered that that officer's responsibility for discipline and order in his command provided an additional reason to doubt his impartiality.

Accordingly, the Court found a violation of article 5.3 and, given the absence of a domestic enforceable right to compensation, it also concluded as to a violation of article 5.5: see, for example, *Brogan and Others v United Kingdom* (*The Times* November 30, 1988; Series A No 145-B, p35, paragraph 67).

As to article 5.4 of the Convention, the Court found no violation of this provision. It noted the applicant's failure to apply for legal aid from the civilian legal aid scheme and observed that he was, in any event, legally represented during the major part of his pre-trial detention by two lawyers including for the habeas corpus proceedings he pursued.

In those circumstances, the applicant had not demonstrated that he did not have available to him guarantees appropriate to the kind of deprivation of liberty in question: see, for example, *Megyeri v Germany* (May 12, 1992, Series A No 237-A, pp11-12, paragraph 22).

Accordingly, the Court found that there had been no violation of article 5.4 of the Convention.

II Alleged violation of article 13 of the Convention

The Court agreed with the Commission that the finding of no violation of article 5.4 in the present case meant that it was not necessary to inquire whether the less strict requirements of article 13 (effective remedy before a national authority) were complied with: see *Brogan and Others* (at p36, paragraph 68).

III Alleged violation of article 6.1 and 6.3 of the Convention

The applicant complained under article 6 that the court-martial was not an independent or impartial tribunal.

As to the applicant's court-martial, the Court recalled that in a previous judgment (*Findlay v United Kingdom* (*The Times* February 27, 1997; Reports of Judgments and Decisions 1997-I) it had found that a court-martial convened pursuant to the Army Act 1955 did not meet the requirements of independence and impartiality set by article 6.1 in view in particular of the central part played in the prosecution by the convening officer who was closely linked to the prosecuting authorities, was superior in rank to the members of the court-martial and had the power, albeit it in prescribed circumstances, to dissolve the court-martial and to refuse to confirm its decision.

The Court could see no reason for distinguishing the present case from that earlier judgment, and therefore found a violation of article 6.1.

IV Application of article 41 of the Convention

The Court awarded the applicant £10,500 in respect of costs and expenses.

Judge Zupancic dissented on the question of an award of non-pecuniary damages to the applicant.

Role of convening officer questioned

Cable and Others v United Kingdom

(Application No 24436/94 and 34 other applications)

Before L. Wildhaber, President and Judges E. Palm, L. Ferrari Bravo, P. Kuris, J-P. Costa, W. Fuhrmann, K. Jungwiert, M. Fischbach, B. Zupancic, N. Vajic, J. Hedigan, W. Thomassen, M. Tsatsa-Nikolovska, T. Pantiru, E.Levits, K. Traja and Judge ad hoc Sir John Freeland.

Deputy Registrar: P. Mahoney

[Judgment February 18]

The European Court of Human Rights held unanimously that, with respect to each of thirty-five applicants, court-martial proceedings had not been independent and impartial within the meaning of article 6.1 of the European Convention of Human Rights.

Article 6 of the Convention provides: "1 In the determination of ... any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing ... by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law..."

The case originated in 35 separate applications, brought by British citizens; 24 of the applicants had served in the Royal Air Force and the other 11 in the Army.

Each applicant was charged with one or more civilian, criminal or disciplinary offences and was tried, convicted and sentenced by a court-martial under the Air Force Act 1955 or the Army Act 1955.

Central to the system was the role of the "convening officer" who, inter alia, was responsible for convening the court-martial and appointing its members and the prosecuting officer.

The convening officer had the final decision on the nature and detail of the charges to be brought, and a plea to a lesser charge could not be accepted from the accused without his or her consent.

In certain circumstances the convening officer could dissolve the court-martial either before or during the trial, and, since he or she usually also acted as confirming officer, the court-martial's findings were not effective until confirmed by him or her.

The applications were lodged with the European Commission of Human Rights on various dates between June 1994 and September 1996.

Having declared the applications admissible, the Commission adopted thirty-five reports on March 4, 1998 in which it expressed the unanimous opinions that in each case there had been a violation of article 6.1 in that the applicant had not received a fair hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal. The British Government referred the cases to the Court on August 14, 1998.

Under the transitional provisions of Protocol No 11 to the Convention, the cases were transmitted to the Grand Chamber of the new European Court of Human Rights on the entry into force of the Protocol on November 1, 1998.

In its judgment, the European Court of Human Rights held:

I Alleged violation of article 6.1 of the Convention

The Court recalled that in *Findlay v United Kingdom* (*The Times* February 27, 1997; Reports of Judgments and Decisions 1997-I) it had found that a court-martial convened pursuant to the Army Act 1955 did not meet the requirements of independence or impartiality set by article 6.1 in view in particular of the central part played in the prosecution by the convening officer, who was closely linked to the prosecuting authorities, was superior in rank to the members of the court-martial and had the power, albeit it in prescribed circumstances, to dissolve the court-martial and to refuse to confirm its decision.

The Court could see no reason for distinguishing the cases of the present 35 applicants from that earlier judgment, and therefore found, unanimously, a violation of article 6.1.

II Application of article 41 of the Convention

The Court awarded the applicants £40,000 in respect of legal costs and expenses, less the amount received in legal aid from the Council of Europe, FFr19,200.

Judge Zupancic dissented on the award of non-pecuniary damages.

Duty to give brief reasons for decision

Stefan v General Medical Council

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Steyn, Lord Clyde, Lord Hutton and Lord Hobhouse of Woodborough

[Judgment March 8]

The health committee of the General Medical Council was obliged to give at least some brief statement of the reasons which formed the basis for its decision.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council so held in allowing an appeal by Dr Marta Stefan from a decision of the health committee under section 37 of the Medical Act 1983 suspending her indefinitely because of a medical condition and in remitting the case to be reheard by a differently constituted committee.

Mr Robert Engelhart, QC and Mr Mark Shaw for the GMC; Dr Stefan in person; Mr Phillip Havers, QC, as amicus curiae.

LORD CLYDE said that there were distinctions between the professional conduct committee and the health committee.

One of those was that the appeal permitted under section 40 of the 1983 Act against a decision of the professional conduct committee was at large, while an appeal against a decision of the health committee was, by virtue of section 40(5) limited to a point of law.

In the present case, their Lordships were concerned solely with the existence of an obligation on the health committee to give reasons for its decisions and not with the position regarding the giving of reasons by the professional conduct committee. They expressly refrained from expressing any view on that matter.

There was no express statutory duty on the health committee to state reasons for its decisions. The procedure which it was required to follow was prescribed in the General Medical Council Health Committee (Procedure) Rules Order 1987-1997 (SI 1987 No 2174, as amended by SI 1996 No 1219 and SI 1997 No 1529).

But neither in the Act nor in the rules was any such express obligation to be found; nor could their Lordships find an implied obligation to state reasons.

But correspondingly, their Lordships were not persuaded that the Act or the rules were to be read as excluding an obligation to give reasons where the common law would require reasons to be given.

The trend of the law had been towards an increased recognition of the duty upon decision-makers of many kinds to give reasons. That trend was consistent with current developments towards an increased openness in matters of government and administration.

But the trend was proceeding on a case-by-case basis and had not lost sight of the established position of the common law that there was no general duty, universally imposed on all decision- makers.

There was certainly a strong argument for the view that what were once seen as exceptions to a rule may now be becoming examples of the norm, and the cases where reasons were not required might be taking on the appearance of exceptions.

But the general rule had not been departed from and their Lordships did not consider that the present case provided an appropriate opportunity to explore the possibility of such a departure. They were conscious of the possible reappraisal of the whole position which the passing of the Human Rights Act 1998 might bring about.

The provisions of article 6(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1953, Cmd 8969) which were now about to become directly accessible in national courts, would require closer attention to be paid to the duty to give reasons, at least in those cases where a person's civil rights and obligations were being determined.

But it was in the context of the application of that Act that any wide-reaching review of the position at common law should take place.

Their Lordships were persuaded that there was a duty at common law upon the committee to state the reasons for its decision.

In the first place, there was the consideration that the decision was one which was open to appeal under the statute. The appeal was only on a ground of law but the existence of such a provision pointed to the view that as matter of fairness in deciding whether there were grounds for appeal, and as matter of assistance in the presentation and determination of any appeal, the reasons for the decision should be given.

Second, a consideration of the whole procedure and function of the committee prompted the conclusion that the procedures which it followed and the function which it performed were akin to those of a court where the giving of reasons would be expected.

Third, the issue was one of considerable importance for the practitioner. It could readily be accepted that the suspension caused Dr Stefan considerable hardship, not only in financial terms through her inability to work as a registered practitioner, but also in respect of her own natural desire to spend the remaining years of her professional career in some fulfilling and satisfying capacity in the medical service.

What she sought was to be allowed to do work as a clinical assistant in ophthalmology at a relatively humble level. The importance of the issue might not closely equate with the importance of personal liberty, but the matter was of very real significance in her own eyes and deserved to be respected.

His Lordship considered the details of the case and said that their Lordships were pursuaded that in all cases heard by the health committee there would be a common law obligation to give at least some brief statement of the reasons which formed the basis for their decision.

Plainly the health committee was bound to carry out its functions with due regard to fairness. The first two of the grounds already mentioned would apply to any case coming before the committee: the provision of a right of appeal and the judicial character of the body pointed to an obligation to give reasons.

Furthermore, in every case the subject matter would be the future right of the doctor to work as a registered practitioner, and while there might be differences between individual cases as to the significance of that from the point of view of the particular practitioner, the general consideration would remain that the committee was adjudicating upon the right of a person to work as a registered practitioner.

There was nothing in the Act nor the rules requiring reasons not to be given and no grounds of policy or public interest justifying such restraint. In the light of the character of the committee and the framework in which it operated, it seemed to their Lordships that there was an obligation on the committee to give at least a short statement of its reasons.

The extent and substance of the reasons had to depend upon the circumstances. They need not be elaborate nor lengthy. But they should be such as to tell the parties in broad terms why the decision was reached. In many cases a very few sentences should suffice to give such explanation as was appropriate to the particular situation.

Their Lordships did not anticipate that the recording of a generally agreed statement of their reasoning would add to the burden of the decision-making process. While the decision involved the application of some medical expertise in the assessment of fitness, the articulation of the reasons for a value judgment should not give rise to difficulty.

Their Lordships observed that in certain other appeals from the health committee which had come before them, succinct but adequate reasons had been stated in the decision. Unfortunately such a course was not adopted in the present case.

Solicitors: Field Fisher Waterhouse; Treasury Solicitor.

External year deemed to be full-time study

O'Connor v Chief Adjudication Officer and Another

Before Lord Justice Swinton Thomas, Lord Justice Auld and Lord Justice Thorpe

[Judgment March 3]

A student who began a full-time university course but after failing his examinations took leave of absence for a year to re-sit his exams as an external student, was deemed to be a full-time student and therefore not entitled to income support.

The Court of Appeal so held by a majority, (Lord Justice Thorpe dissenting), dismissing the appeal of Damian Charles O'Connor against the decision of Mr J. Mesher, social security commissioner on June 16, 1997 overturning the Social Security Appeal Tribunal and hoilding that be was not entitled to income support. The respondents were the Chief Adjudication Officer and the Secretary of State for Social Security.

Regulation 61 of the Income Support (General) Regulations (SI 1987 No 1967) as amended by regulation 2 of the Social Security Benefits (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (SI 1995 No 1742) defined "student" as: "... a person ... aged 19 or over but under pensionable age who is attending a full-time course of study at an educational establishment; and ... (a) a person who has started on such a course shall be treated as attending it until the last day of the course or such earlier date as he abandons it or is dismissed from it..."

Mr Richard Drabble, QC, for Mr O'Connor; Mr J. R. McManus for the respondents.

LORD JUSTICE AULD said that by regulation 10(1)(h) of the 1987 regulations a "student" was "not to be treated as available for employment" and did not, therefore, qualify for income support.

Paragraph (a) of the definition of "student" in regulation 61, both before and after its amendment in 1995 following the Court of Appeal decision in *Chief Adjudication Officer v Clarke* (*The Times* February 22, 1995; [1995] ELR 259), was a deeming provision.

Where a claimant started on a full-time course it provided that he should be treated as continuing to attend it, and hence remain a student, and be excluded from income support, until its last day or earlier abandonment or dismissal.

The deeming effect of the provision depended on a claimant having started a full-time course, and it was a necessary function of it that he could be treated thereafter as attending it even when be was not.

The critical question in *Clarke*, and in this case, was whether non-attendance might be for such a reason and/or of such duration, regardless of abandonment or dismissal, that a claimant could no longer be treated as attending on a full-time course because his non-attendance had brought the course to an end.

The rationale for the general exclusion of full-time students of university age from recourse to income support when in need seemed to have been that they could normally be expected to rely on educational grants, or increasingly, student loans to cover the period of their full-time study, including all vacation periods.

In *Clarke* the Court of Appeal held by a majority that students who intercalated an academic year pending an intended resumption of the course were not students within regulation 61 and were thus able to claim income support during the intercalated periods.

The main issue on Mr O'Connor's appeal was whether he was a student within regulation 61, as amended, when, for a full academic year, he was not attending any full-time course of study but registered as an external student.

In October 1993 Mr O'Connor began a full-time degree course at Sheffield University, which normally took three years. In his second year he failed part of his examinations.

The university agreed that he could take leave of absence for the following year and re-sit them as an external student, and resume *the course the following year*. He was not entitled to attend lectures during the year, to use any of the university's facilities or to any form of student funding.

For part of the year he combined his studies with a job. In December 1995, when he made the claim for income support, he was unemployed and available for and actively seeking employment.

Lord Justice Evans in *Chief Adjudication Officer v Webber* ([1998] 1 WLR 625), construing regulation 61 before the 1995 amendment, had reservations as to the deeming effect of the regulation where the facts did not correspond with the effect deemed.

His Lordship said that the whole point of a deeming provision was that it required a fiction to be treated as fact.

There was no uncertainty in the words or purpose of the regulation; they required that a person who had started a full- time course should be treated as attending it until its last day subject to his earlier abandonment of or dismissal from it, and were thus intended to cover periods of non-attendance for whatever reason so long as the person remained committed to finish the course.

The position was put beyond doubt by the amendment of the regulation. Its clear purpose was to underline the deemed continuity of full-time student status even when interrupted, for whatever reason, for as long as a complete academic year or more.

If there was a condition precedent to the exclusion from income support, it was that the claimant should have started a full-time course, not that he was enrolled on one at the time of his claim. Abandonment meant permanent or final abandonment of the course of study which a claimant had started.

Mr McManus submitted that whether a course of study was full-time was determined at its start, not according to later changes prompted by events. Mr O'Connor was not entitled to re-characterise his course from full-time to part-time because he failed his examinations part way through it.

His Lordship agreed that was correct, otherwise no course would be full-time in the event of the institution running it allowing a student to intercalate a period. That would defeat the whole purpose of the deeming provision.

Unlike the course in *Webber*, the course Mr O'Connor started was a full-time three year course. Although the university permitted him to take a year's break, it was not an option when he started the course. During his year off he had not abandoned it or been dismissed from it.

The amendment to regulation 61 was not irrational. It was important to keep in mind that the general effect of the provision and the policy behind it, namely to finance full-time higher education studies out of student loans or grants rather than social security payments and to encourage full-time students to make progress with their studies rather than spinning them out with the aid of social security.

There was not the same imperative for part-time students who, in the main, were in employment and needed to tailor their pattern and periods of studying to their work.

The fact that the general policy might produce hardship in individual cases did not make it or the subsidiary legislation implementing it irrational.

The secretary of state's concern that full-time students should attend their studies and pass their examinations, was a matter he was entitled to take into account, and clearly did in making the amendment.

Indeed, since student funding had begun to move away from grants to loans, it could support an argument that it was irrational that students who had failed their examinations should be entitled to social security benefits whereas those who had passed them had to pay their own way with borrowed money.

Lord Justice Thorpe delivered a dissenting judgment and Lord Justice Swinton Thomas delivered a judgment agreeing with Lord Justice Auld.

Solicitors: Howells, Sheffield; Solicitor, Department of Social Security.

Construction adjudicator's decision is binding

Macob Civil Engineering Ltd v Morrison Construction Ltd

Before Mr Justice Dyson

[Judgment February 12]

A decision by an adjudicator under the Scheme for Construction Contracts (England and Wales) Regulations (SI 1998 No 649) the validity of which had been challenged was nevertheless a decision within the meaning of the 1988 Regulations and the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

The usual remedy for failure to pay in accordance with an adjudicator's decision was to issue proceedings claiming the sum due, followed by an application for summary judgment, rather than a mandatory injunction.

Mr Justice Dyson, in a reserved judgment in the Technology and Construction Court of the Queen's Bench Division, declared:

(i) that the decision of an adjudicator made in accordance with Part I of the Schedule to the 1998 Scheme dated January 6, 1999 that the defendant, Morrison Construction Ltd, forthwith pay the plaintiff, Macob Civil Engineering Ltd, £302,366.34 plus value-added tax, interest and fees, was binding on the defendant until the dispute arising from the decision was finally determined by arbitration, legal proceedings or agreement, and

(ii) that the defendant was required by the said decision to pay the sums identified by the adjudicator forthwith.

Paragraph 23 of the 1998 Regulationse provides: "(2) The decision of the adjudicator shall be binding on the parties, and they shall comply with it until the dispute is finally determined by legal proceedings, by arbitration ... or by agreement between the parties."

Miss Delia Dumaresq for the plaintiff; Mr Stephen Furst, QC and Mr Michael Bowsher for the defendant.

MR JUSTICE DYSON said that the plaintiff had subcontracted with the defendant under a "construction contract" within the meaning of the 1996 Act. A dispute about payment was referred to an adjudicator under the 1998 Regulations.

The adjudicator decided in favour of the plaintiff, made an order under paragraph 23(1) of Part I of the Schedule to the Regulations that the parties comply peremptorily with his decision, and gave permission under section 42 of the Arbitration Act 1996 for either party to apply to the court for an order requiring compliance with the decision. The plaintiff was seeking such an order to enforce the adjudicator's decision.

It was accepted that the contract between the parties did not comply with all the requirements of section 108(1) to (4) of the 1996 Act and consequently by section 108(5) and 114(4) of the Act the adjudication provisions found in Part I of the Schedule to the Regulations would apply, having effect as implied terms of the contract.

Paragraph 23(2) of Part I of the Schedule to the Regulations provided that the decision of an adjudicator would be binding on the parties until the dispute was finally determined.

The defendant alleged that the adjudicator's decision had breached the rules of natural justice, and was therefore not a valid decision.

The defendant's primary submission was that the meaning of "decision" within section 108(3) of the 1996 Act and paragraph 23 of Part I of the Schedule to the Regulations was "a lawful and valid decision".

Therefore, where the validity of a decision had been challenged, it was not a decision which was binding or enforceable as a contractual obligation, by virtue of paragraph 23(2), until it had been determined or agreed that the decision was valid.

In his Lordship's view, if that argument were correct it would substantially undermine the effectiveness of the adjudication scheme set up by the Regulations.

The intention of Parliament in enacting the 1996 Act had plainly been to introduce a speedy mechanism for settling disputes in construction contracts on a provisional interim basis, and for requiring adjudicators' decisions to be enforced pending the final determination of such disputes.

His Lordship noted that it was very easy to challenge a decision based on an alleged breach of natural justice, and an unsuccessful party before the adjudicator would need only to make such a challenge in order to prevent the decision's enforcement.

In his Lordship's judgment, if Parliament had intended to qualify the word "decision" in some way then that could have been done. His Lordship could think of no could reason why the word should not be given its plain and ordinary meaning.

An adjudicator's decision whose validity had been challenged was nevertheless a decision within the meaning of the Act and the Regulations.

The defendant had alternatively argued that the court had no power to make an order under section 42 of the Arbitration Act 1996, as modified by paragraph 24 to Part I of the Schedule to the Regulations, because, by section 42(1) that power was exercisable "unless otherwise agreed by the parties", and a clause in the contract which referred disputes arising out of an adjudicator's decision to arbitration was such an agreement.

In his Lordship's judgment, section 42(1) contemplated an agreement expressly directed to the section 42 power, and the arbitration clause was not such an agreement.

There had also been discussion as to whether the appropriate procedure for the plaintiff was by way of writ and an application for summary judgment, or by way of application for a mandatory injunction.

In his Lordship's judgment, the High Court indubitably had the jurisdiction to grant a mandatory injunction to enforce an adjudicator's decision, but it would rarely be appropriate to grant injunctive relief to enforce an obligation on one contracting party to pay the other.

Different considerations applied where a party sought to enforce some other obligation, for example, to carry out specified work, or where the decision ordered payment of money to a third party, such as a trustee stakeholder.

The usual remedy for failure to pay in accordance with an adjudicator's decision would be to issue proceedings claiming the sum due, followed by an application for summary judgment, and in the circumstances of the case his Lordship would not exercise his discretion to grant an injunction.

Solicitors: Morgan Cole, Cardiff; Wragge & Co, Birmingham.

Evaluation not necessary

Lakey v Merton Sutton and Wandsworth Health Authority

In an action for damages for medical negligence it was not necessarily incumbent on the trial judge to explain why he found the contribution made by the expert witnesses' evidence to be perhaps partisan and unhelpful.

Lord Justice Thorpe so stated when sitting in the Court of Appeal on February 3 with Lord Justice Nourse and Lord Justice Potter dismissing an appeal by the plaintiff, Margaret Lakey, from the dismissal by Mr Justice Holland on June 25, 1998 of her claim for damages for medical negligence in failing to refer her for an X-ray and diagnose a fractured pelvis.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the plaintiff complained of the failure by the judge to evaluate the evidence of the experts.

But probably it was not uncommon in that field of litigation for the forensic experts to take relatively extreme positions in the hope of securing an outcome for the party by whom each was instructed.

It was to be suspected in this case that the judge found each expert to be guilty of some error in presentation. It was not incumbent on him to explain at great length why he found the experts' contribution perhaps partisan and perhaps unhelpful.

His function was to explain clearly, as the judge here had done, the conclusions he had reached.

Refusing extension of residence leave

El-Yassini v Secretary of State for the Home Department

Case C-416/96

Before G. C. Rodriguez Iglesias, President and Judges P. J. G. Kapteyn, J.-P. Puissochet, G. Hirsch, P. Jann, G. F. Mancini, J. C. Moitinho de Almeida, C. Gulmann, D. A. O. Edward, H. Ragnemalm, L. Sevón, M. Wathelet and R. Schintgen

Advocate General P. Leger

(Opinion May 19, 1998)

[Judgment March 2]

The cooperation agreement between Morocco and the European Community did not in principle preclude a member state from refusing to extend the residence permit of a Moroccan national who had been permitted to take up employment, when the initial reason for granting him leave to stay no longer existed.

However, it would be different if the person had been granted a work permit for a period longer than that of his residence permit.

An immigration adjudicator was a court or tribunal under article 177 of the EC Treaty.

The Court of Justice of the European Communities so held when giving a preliminary ruling pursuant to a reference under article 177 by an immigration adjudicator.

The applicant, Nour Eddline El-Yassini, a Moroccan national, was given leave to enter the United Kingdom, with a restriction on taking up employment.

On marrying a British national, he obtained leave to remain, and the restriction on employment was removed. From then on he was lawfully in gainful employment.

The couple subsequently separated, and the applicant's application for an extension of his leave to remain was refused.

In his appeal to an immigration adjudicator, the applicant maintained that a migrant Moroccan worker had a right to remain in a member state of the Community for so long as he lawfully remained in his employment, as a result of article 40 of the Co-operation Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Kingdom of Morocco, signed in Rabat on April 27, 1976 and concluded on behalf of the Community by Council Regulation (EEC) No 2211/78 of September 26, 1978 (OJ 1978 L264, p1).

Article 40 provides: "The treatment accorded by each member state to workers of Moroccan nationality employed in its territory shall be free from any discrimination based on nationality, as regards working conditions or remuneration, in relation to its own nationals..."

Article 177 provides: "Where [certain questions are] raised before any court or tribunal of a member state, that court or tribunal may ... request the Court of Justice to give a ruling thereon..."

In its judgment the Court of Justice held:

There was a preliminary issue of admissibility.

In determining whether a body making a reference was a court or tribunal for the purposes of article 177 of the Treaty, a number of factors were to be taken into account, such as whether the body was established by law, whether it was permanent, whether its jurisdiction was compulsory, whether its procedure was inter partes, whether it applied rules of law, and whether it was independent.

The court considered features of the office of immigration adjudicator, which was established by the Immigration Act 1971, and held that such an adjudicator was a court or tribunal.

Since article 40 of the EEC-Morocco Agreement contained a clear and precise obligation which was not subject, in its implementation or effects, to the adoption of any subsequent measure, it was to be accepted as having direct effect, so that individuals could rely on it before the national courts. As to the scope of article 40, it was clear from the case law that, even as regarded the application of the fundamental right of persons to move freely within the Community, the reservation contained in, in particular, article 48(3) of the Treaty allowed member states to adopt, with respect to nationals of other member states, on the grounds of public policy, public security or public health, measures which they could not apply to their own nationals, who under international law could not be expelled from the national territory or denied entry to it.

The situation must be the same in relation to an agreement between the Community and a third country.

The applicant argued however that there should be applied by analogy the court's case law on the rules governing the association between the EEC and Turkey, according to which the employment rights of migrant workers entailed recognition of a right of residence, which did not depend on the reason for which the right of entry, the right to work and the right of residence were initially granted: see for example, Case C-237/91 *Kus v Landeshauptstadt Wiesbaden* ([1992] ECR I-6781, paragraphs 21-23 and 29).

The flaw in that argument was that the EEC-Morocco Agreement was different from the EEC-Turkey Agreement in two significant respects: it did not provide for the examination in due course by the contracting parties of the possibility of the third country's accession to the Community, and it was not intended progressively to secure freedom of movement for workers.

It was therefore to be concluded that, as Community law stood at present, a member state was not in principle prohibited from refusing to extend the residence permit of a Moroccan national whom it had previously authorised to enter its territory and to take up gainful employment there, where the initial reason for the grant of his leave to stay no longer existed by the time that his residence permit expired.

The fact that the refusal would oblige the person concerned to terminate his employment in the host member state before the end of the contractual term agreed with his employer would not, as a general rule, affect that conclusion.

However, the situation would be different if the host state had granted the worker specific rights in relation to employment which were more extensive than the rights of residence conferred on him by that state.

The effectiveness of article 40 necessarily required that, where a Moroccan national had been duly authorised to take up gainful employment for a given period on the territory of a member state, that worker enjoyed, throughout that period, the rights which that provision conferred on him.

On those grounds the Court ruled:

Article 40 of the EEC-Morocco Co-operation Agreement was to be interpreted as not precluding in principle a host member state from refusing to extend the residence permit of a Moroccan national whom it had authorised to enter its territory and to take up gainful employment there, for the entire period during which be had that employment there, where the initial reason for the grant of his leave to stay no longer existed by the time that his residence permit expired.

The situation would be different only if, in the absence of grounds relating to the protection of a legitimate national interest, such as public policy, public security or public health, that refusal were to affect the right actually to engage in employment conferred on the person concerned by a work permit duly granted by the competent national authorities for a period exceeding that of his residence permit. It was for the national court to determine whether that was the case.

Bargains of the week: from boating on the Broads to touring the tulip fields of The Netherlands and ten days in Nepal



■ *A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and farther afield, many at bargain prices*

BRITISH ISLES

CITY hotels are eager to make up for missing business guests this Easter by offering special rates to tourists. In London a night's B&B at a two-star hotel *costs from £29 and at a four-*star from £45 with The Hotel Directory. Children stay for free in some hotels. Details: 0181-770 0123.

■ AT MALMAISON hotels in Glasgow, Manchester and Newcastle, two nights over Easter in a room equipped with a CD player cost £130 per couple and include use of the gym. Details: 0141-572 1000.

■ A STAY in a country hotel over Easter will be more expensive but good offers do exist. A two-night break with some meals at the Old Course Hotel, St Andrews, Scotland, start at £159. Details: 01334 474371.

■ AN AFTERNOON of "country pursuits" plus a jazz band and children's entertainment is part of an Easter package at Wood Hall, a Georgian mansion near Wetherby, Yorkshire. Two nights will cost £199, with three costing £259 — includes B&B, dinner and tea. Details: 01937 587271.

■ BE WARNED! A touch of *Fawlty Towers* can be expected at the Spread Eagle Hotel in Midhurst, West Sussex, over Easter when scenes from the television comedy will be performed by professional actors. Two nights' dinner, B&B, *entertainment and use of the* health spa costs from £180. Details: 01730 816911.

■ LAKE DISTRICT walking holidays on offer before Easter include four nights' dinner and B&B at Grasmere from March 22 for £147 with Countrywide Holidays. Details: 01942 241432.

■ BOATING on the Broads before Easter will cost £340 a week for a four-berth cruiser with Norfolk Broads Direct, or £218 for shorter breaks. Details: 0800 9173206.

EUROPE

ROME in peace and quiet may seem a contradiction but is on offer from Cottages to Castles. A week from March 19 in apartments in a 90-year-old house in the Monte Sacro district costs from £250, with return flights from Gatwick. Details: 01622 726883.

■ ANDORRA escaped the avalanches and is still available at cheap prices. Fly from Manchester on Sunday and a week's Airtours self-catering holiday costs £149 with Co-op Travelcare. If you need more time to plan, Lunn Poly offers a week from March 21 with Thomson and a flight from *Manchester for £169, based on* four sharing. Details: Co-op, 0541 500388; Lunn Poly Holiday Shops.

■ DUTCH bulb field tours remain popular, and Leger Holidays' coach trip from a choice of pick-up points in England and Wales on March 26 also includes visits to Amsterdam, Antwerp and Brussels. The weekend break, with three nights' B&B, costs £129. Details: 01709 839839.

■ SLEDGING, snow-hole digging and ski jumping are among the activities in a children's week from March 27 at the Norwegian resort of Venabu. The package from Headwater costs £787 for adults and £328 for children under 12, including return flights and full board. Details: 01606 813367.

■ EASTER weekend breaks for singles are available from Solo's, including three nights in a variety of UK hotels from £259 and three nights in a four-star hotel in Madrid for £489, with return flights from Heathrow. Both holidays begin on April 2. Details: 0181-951 2800.

■ A CAMPSITE on a hillside close to a sandy cove on the Costa Brava over Easter is available at bargain prices from Eurocamp. A self-drive fortnight for a family of two adults and up to four children, staying in a mobile home with all mod cons and starting on any day of the school holidays, costs from £485, including a short Channel crossing. Details: 01606 787878.

■ SICILY in spring is available from £409 for departures between April 5 and 30 with Belleair. The price includes return flights from Gatwick and a week's B&B in Taormina. Details: 0181-785 3266.

PICTUREPOINT



Classic Italy: visit Sicily's ancient sites in the spring

BOSTON seems the place to go at the moment with a host of offers to the famous East Coast city but all of them must be booked by the end of next week, *Tony Dawe writes.*

Three nights between April 5 and May 31 cost £325 with Funway Holidays with return flights from Heathrow, while flight-only deals cost £147 for the same period with Bridge The World. Students and under-26s pay a little less, £139 return including taxes, with Campus. Details: Funway, 0181-466 0222; Bridge, 0171-916 0990; Campus, 0171-730 2101.

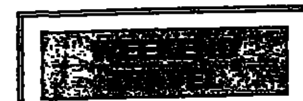
■ FINAL call for a 16-day deal in Egypt costing £625. The Beyond the Pyramids tour leaves Heathrow on Sunday and includes eight nights' camping, some in Sinai, three nights on board a felucca on the Nile and four in hotels to explore the Valley of the Kings and other sites. The trip with The Imaginative Traveller includes most meals and guide. Details: 0181-742 8612.

■ SAM LORD'S CASTLE in Barbados, a stylish all-inclusive resort, is available at half-price for departures between March 25 and April 1. A week with Thomas Cook Holidays now costs £759 with return flights from Gatwick. Details: 01733 418450.

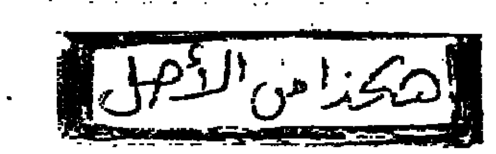
■ KERALA is becoming an increasingly popular Indian destination and you can visit the *region* before it becomes too busy and expensive with Somak Holidays, which has departures from Gatwick on April 4 and 11. A fortnight's B&B at Sandy Beach resort within reach of the intriguing backwaters costs from £379. Details: 0181-423 3000.

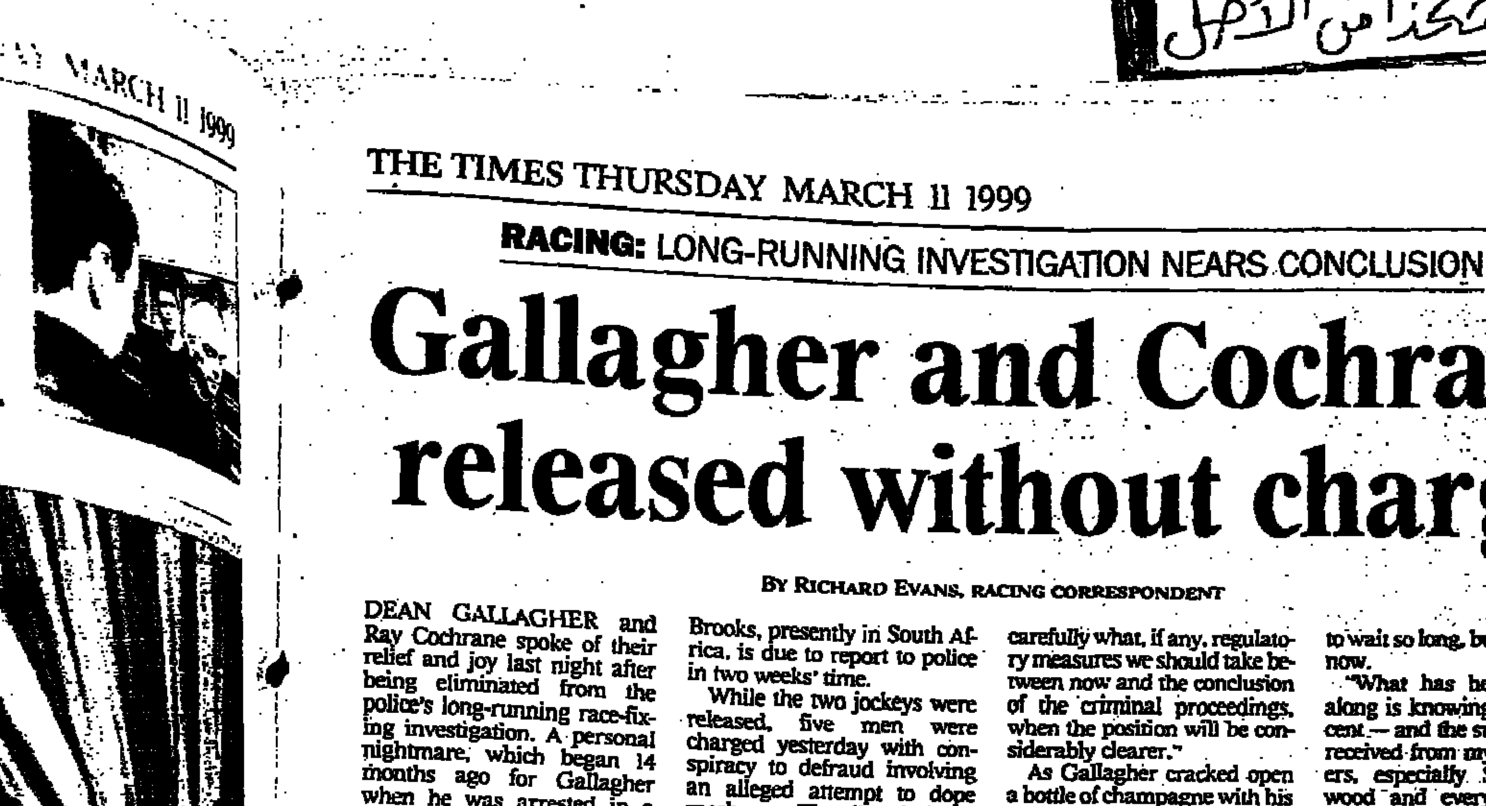
■ NEPAL for ten days from £699 is a near-unbearable offer from Bales Worldwide. Fly from Heathrow on May 23 and stay in Kathmandu, the medieval city of Bhadgaon and a mountain resort. Details: 01306 732738.

● *All prices per person and based on two sharing unless otherwise stated.*



See *The Times* on Saturday for more flight bargains and last-minute holidays





RACING: LONG-RUNNING INVESTIGATION NEARS CONCLUSION

Gallagher and Cochrane released without charge

By Richard Evans, Racing Correspondent

DEAN GALLAGHER and Ray Cochrane spoke of their relief and joy last night after being eliminated from the police's long-running race-fixing investigation. A personal nightmare, which began 14 months ago for Gallagher when he was arrested in a dawn swoop, ended in a matter of minutes at Charing Cross police station when he and Cochrane were told they would face no charges and were free to leave.

However, the pair could still face disciplinary action from the Jockey Club, which said it would "review all the information available and, having taken legal advice, determine if and when any regulatory action is appropriate under the rules of racing".

Cochrane was arrested in January this year along with Graham Bradley and Charlie Brooks. Bradley was rebailed until next month, while Brooks, presently in South Africa, is due to report to police in two weeks' time.

While the two jockeys were released, five men were charged yesterday with conspiracy to defraud involving an alleged attempt to dope racehorses. The alleged offences took place in March 1997.

Scotland Yard said the five — Adam Anthony Hodgson, Glen Robert Gill, Jason Ronal William Moore, Raymond Lawrence Butler and John Paul Matthews — would appear at Bow Street magistrates court later this month.

Christopher Foster, the Jockey Club's executive director, said: "The Jockey Club considers the fact that some charges have now been brought at least brings this investigation a significant step nearer to conclusion.

"We are mindful of the fact that this matter is sub-judice and we will have to consider carefully what, if any, regulatory measures we should take between now and the conclusion of the criminal proceedings, when the position will be considerably clearer."

As Gallagher cracked open a bottle of champagne with his fiancée, Louis Kent, he displayed no signs of bitterness at the length of time he has been under suspicion — and he ruled out legal action against the police or the Jockey Club.

"It has been a frustrating time for me over the past year or so and I have had difficult times, but I am a strong person and I have battled through it. Now I am released and obviously thrilled and delighted.

"I have always protested my innocence and I had great faith in the British justice system. I knew I would be exonerated in the end, but these things take time to sort out. It is frustrating I have had to wait so long, but it is all over now.

"What has helped me all along is knowing I was innocent — and the support I have received from my main trainers, especially Simon Sherwood and everyone at Uplands Racing."

Gallagher, who has ridden 27 winners this season and hopes to complete a half century, added: "Everyone has been so supportive in giving me rides. They knew I would not be into anything untoward."

Cochrane said: "I am absolutely delighted and it is a big weight off my mind. It has caused a lot of stress to my family and I am glad it is all over."

After arriving at the police station along with Gallagher and waiting for about a quarter of an hour, the police told both men they had nothing further to ask them and they were free to leave. "Dean was obviously delighted. He's been on bail a long time and I feel sorry for him. But now we are both free," Cochrane added.

He also ruled out legal action saying: "People are doing their jobs. If things are wrong and they need investigating, that is their job. It is just unfortunate. Now we are looking forward to getting on with our lives. I have got some very nice horses to ride — an association with James Fanshawe — and a couple of other good trainers have asked me to ride work for them."



Cochrane, left, and Gallagher, centre, have been cleared, but Bradley has been rebailed



Nick Dundee and Williamson are likely to renew their partnership in the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup a week today

Gold Cup awaits Nick Dundee

By Chris McGrath

EVEN his trainer and jockey may not be immune from the temptation to describe the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup as a reckless target for Nick Dundee. But the race sponsor yesterday gave some credence to the idea, which has apparently enthused his owner, John Magnier, by introducing the Irish novice to its list at just 9-1.

The Tote also scratched Nick Dundee from its betting on the Royal & SunAlliance Novices' Chase, on the face of it the more prudent alternative for an inexperienced horse who has never encountered a rival remotely approaching the calibre of Florida Pearl or Teeton Mill. Norman Williamson, set to forfeit his partnership with the latter, will have obvious reasons for wishing that Magnier would wait another year for the Gold Cup. Edward O'Grady, the horse's experienced trainer, is perhaps more neutral but evidently shares the jockey's conclusion.

Nick Dundee had been a hot favourite for the novice race after three dashing wins on very muddy home soil, and it may be that the prevailing soft ground is considered too opportune to squander, since the going could easily be fast for the Festival next year. Certainly Williamson and O'Grady believe Nick Dundee to be a horse of authentic Gold standard.

It was the punters who were running round like March hares yesterday, Ladbrokes matching the Tote's reports of sustained demand for Nick Dundee in the Gold Cup. The horse's connections nonetheless persisted in playing a straight bat.

"We're weighing the pros and cons," a spokesman for Magnier said. "We've decided to leave it until as late as possible and that looks like Saturday. There has been no decision on where the horse runs or who rides." O'Grady agreed that "nothing has been confirmed".

Suggestions that Tony McCoy has already been lined up to replace Williamson were firmly rebuffed by the owners of Teeton Mill. Mark Gichero, spokesman for The Winning Line, said: "As far as we are concerned, Norman rides. We haven't thought about a replacement as he hasn't told us otherwise."

McCoy would be free for Teeton Mill should Unsinkable Boxer be switched to an alternative engagement at the Festival, and Martin Pipe is thought to favour the SunAlliance Chase once Nick Dundee is confirmed a non-runner. For now, the Tote makes Spendid 5-1 favourite with the Oliver Sherwood pair, Lord Of The River and Kadou Nonantais, on 6-1.

To complete a typical day of pre-Cheltenham charades, Teeton Mill's stablemate, Lady Rebecca, is the outcast of the Bonusprint Stayers' Hurdle market because of suggestions that she may miss the race with a setback.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Bangor

Going: chases: heavy; hurdles: soft

[illegible]

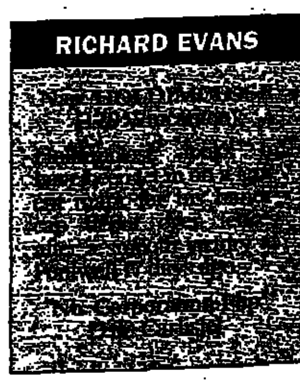
Southwell

Going: slow

[illegible]

Placepot: £56.30. Quadpot: £4.50.

RICHARD EVANS



[illegible]

WINCANTON

THUNDERER

2.20 Tarxien
2.50 Flying Fiddler
3.20 Naiysari
3.50 Hot 'N Saucy
4.20 Some-Toy
4.50 Ehtefaal
5.20 Father Krismas

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.20 NAIYSARI.

Carl Evans: 4.20 Skip'N'Time.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

2.20 KEN BRITTEN MEMORIAL MAIDEN HURDLE

(Div I: £2,094: 2m) (16 runners)

101 ADULATION 164F (J Chapple Hyam) J Old 5-11-5 G Bradley —
102 6 ALKATEB 111 (P Eccles) P Eccles 7-11-5 Miss V Roberts (7) 25
103 36P CRICKETING 49 T George 7-11-5 R Walley —
104 036/00 FAIRY KNIGHT 15 (Major A Everett) K Bailey 7-11-5 Edgar Byrne (7) 48
105 GUIDO 34 Miss V Williams 6-11-5 N Williamson 45

[illegible]

2.50 BROADSTONE NOVICES CHASE

(£3,558: 2m 5f) (6 runners)

[illegible]

3.20 WINCANTON LOGISTICS HANDICAP CHASE

(£7,035: 2m 5f) (8 runners)

[illegible]

Course-and-distance winner CAPENWRAY returned to form last time and has strong claims here

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
N Graham	3	4	75.0	J Tizzard	5	15	33.3
I Balding	3	8	37.5	J Osborne	12	52	23.1
P Nicholls	38	133	28.6	A McCoy	25	118	21.2
M Pipe	36	152	23.7	G Bradley	7	34	20.6
K Bailey	10	44	22.7	A Thornton	12	62	19.4
A J Wilson	3	14	21.4	P Hide	9	52	17.3
Miss V Williams	3	15	20.0	C Maude	12	71	16.9

3.50 LADBROKE TOMMY WALLIS HURDLE [SHOWCASE HANDICAP]

(£5,277: 2m) (8 runners)

[illegible]

4.20 DICK WOODHOUSE HUNTERS CHASE

(£1,469: 3m 1f 110yd) (4 runners)

[illegible]

4.50 SPARKFORD HANDICAP HURDLE [TOTE TRIFECTA RACE]

(£2,808: 2m 6f) (13 runners)

[illegible]

5.20 KEN BRITTEN MEMORIAL MAIDEN HURDLE

(Div II: £2,094: 2m) (16 runners)

[illegible]

FATHER KRISMAS lost nothing in defeat to stablemate Estate Agent last time

CARLISLE

THUNDERER

2.00 Time Of Flight. 2.30 Jaunty General. 3.00 Corporation Pop. 3.30 Sad Mad Bad. 4.00 Shannon Shoon. 4.30 THE NEXT WALTZ (nap). 5.00 Flashant.

GOING: HEAVY (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

2.00 BORDER ESK NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE

(£2,318: 3m 110yd) (9 runners)

[illegible]

2.30 DERWENT HANDICAP CHASE

(£2,723: 2m) (7)

[illegible]

3.00 LANGHOLM NOVICES HURDLE

(£2,430: 2m 4f 110yd) (10)

[illegible]

3.30 EDINBURGH WOOLLEN MILL NOVICES CHASE

(£5,472: 2m 4f 110yd) (5)

[illegible]

4.00 WAVER CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE

(£2,192: 2m 1f) (7)

[illegible]

4.30 GOLDEN PHEASANT YOUNGERS HANDICAP CHASE

(£3,539: 3m 2f) (6)

[illegible]

5.00 LIDDEL WATER INTERMEDIATE OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE

(£1,431: 2m 1f) (9)

[illegible]

COURSE SPECIALISTS

[illegible]

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Carlisle: 2.00 River Douglas. Towcester: 4.40 Roskeen Bridge, Sir Ol Brandy. Wincanton: 5.20 Treasure Chest

TOWCESTER

THUNDERER

2.10 Come On Eilish. 2.40 Ever Blessed. 3.10 Bora Bora. 3.40 Get The Point. 4.10 Lancastrian Jet. 4.40 Avostar. 5.10 Good Job.

Carl Evans: 4.40 Bally Riot.

GOING: SOFT (HEAVY IN PLACES) SIS

2.10 TOWCESTER CONFERENCES CONDITIONALS NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE

(£2,338: 3m) (7 runners)

[illegible]

2.40 ARLINGTON MERCEDES BENZ S-CLASS NOVICES CHASE

(£3,028: 2m 6f) (5)

[illegible]

3.10 HOECHST ROUSSEL PANACUR EBF MARES NH NOVICES HURDLE

(£3,179: 2m 5f) (8)

[illegible]

3.40 TOWCESTER MEANS BUSINESS HANDICAP HURDLE

(£2,785: 2m) (5)

[illegible]

4.10 ARLINGTON MERCEDES BENZ S-CLASS HANDICAP CHASE

(£3,560: 3m 1f) (4)

[illegible]

4.40 EASTON NESTON HUNTERS CHASE

(£1,042: 3m 1f) (9)

[illegible]

5.10 DONCASTER BLOODSTOCK SALES/EBF MARES STANDARD NH FLAT RACE

(£1,452: 2m) (10)

[illegible]

COURSE SPECIALISTS

[illegible]

Josr Algarhoud ruled out of 2,000 Guineas

JOSR ALGARHOUD, winner of the Gimcrack Stakes last year when trained by Mick Channon, will miss the Sagitta 2,000 Guineas at Newmarket on May 1. The colt was not among the 89 entries published yesterday.

Josr Algarhoud, who left Channon to join Godolphin in Dubai, was quoted at around 20-1 for the group one race. The colt suffered a setback last month, putting his participation in doubt. Godolphin's possible Guineas contenders now include Dubai Millennium, Easaar and Maidaan, with a firm decision likely to be made after trials in Dubai next month. The Maktoum family's operation is responsible for 22 of the 2,000 Guineas entries and 13 of the 83 entries for the 1,000 Guineas.

A major rebuilding programme is taking place at Newmarket's Rowley Mile course, so the first two classics will be staged on the July course. Nick Lees, the clerk of the course, said: "Both Classics look set to be ultra-competitive affairs."

Ladbrokes bets: 2,000 Guineas: 4-1 Aljabr (with a run), 6-1 Mujahid, 8-1 Stravinsky, 10-1 Black Rock Desert, Orpen, Ifitah, 12-1 Commander Collins, 14-1 Enrique, Ballet Master, 16-1 Auction House, Killer Instinct, 25-1 others.

TENNIS

Henman holds first-night nerve

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN INDIAN WELLS, CALIFORNIA

THEY were not quite the first-night conditions that the No 7 seed would have hoped for, but, on a chill evening in the desert, the outcome was exactly what the doctor ordered. Tim Henman eased through his opening encounter at the Newsweek Champions Cup here to beat Hicham Arazi 6-3, 6-3, hardly breaking sweat during his hour's work. Then again, such was the cold, it would have been hard for either man to glow, much less perspire, even if they had been running until midnight.

Much of the crowd had left the stadium, huddling round the burger stands in search of warmth, by the time that Henman walked on court. Clad in a sensible warm woolly and neat khaki shorts, the Great Britain No1 looked suitably businesslike as he set to work. The first service was in fine fettle, bringing nine aces, the volleys were doing what they were supposed to and even if the forehand was a little iffy at times, it served its purpose when it had to.

Arazi is one of those frustrating players who should be ranked higher than his present position of No 41. He can be brilliant and he can be dreadful, sometimes all within the space of one rally. On Tuesday night, he began with the former but had reverted to the latter by the end of the first set. Not the biggest or the most powerful of men, he is a clever little chap and gave Henman a few problems. Using lots of slice to slow the pace, he sat and waited for Henman to go for the big winner and overhit the shot by a yard. But it was not tolast.

Henman had only one brief moment of concern, having to fend off a couple of break points, but he then went on to show Arazi how it was done three games later, breaking the Moroccan to wrap up the opening set. By the start of the second, Arazi was beginning to lose interest, while some of the crowd were losing the will to live as the cold began to bite. Muttering and harrumphing as the line calls went against him, Arazi fell apart and Henman swept up the mess.

"I can't have any complaints with the way I played," Henman said, stating the obvious. "I was winning points from the baseline and coming in when I could. I was chipping and charging on his second serve and covering the net well. Long may it continue." He makes it all sound so simple. Greg Rusedski, his potential opponent in the third round, may not be quite so straightforward; his rival for the No 1 spot at home has beaten him two times out of three.

Henman was one of the few seeds to come through unscathed on Tuesday. Pat Rafter, seeded No 5, came unstuck against Nicolas Kiefer 7-6, 3-6, 7-5, adding another defeat to a distinctly ropy start to the season.

At least he could see the positive side of the defeat. "I'm playing a lot better than I was last week, so things are starting to come along," he said. "It's just a matter of not playing enough at the moment. I'm trying to find the form again and I felt it coming back a little bit today. It will come back."

Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the No 2 seed, had everything to play for with the chance to overtake Pete Sampras at the top of the rankings, but Gustavo Kuerten had other plans.

After a first-set thrashing, Kuerten came back to win 0-6, 7-6, 6-3 and leave Kafelnikov to wait for another two weeks before he gets his next shot at the top spot.

"Unfortunately, I played the wrong shots at the wrong time," Kafelnikov said. Did he put too much pressure on himself because of the No 1 ranking? "No, not at all, not at all, no," he said rather too quickly. So it never crossed his mind? "No, no," he assured the listening throng. Alas, Kafelnikov doth protest too much. Since his win in Rotterdam put him within touching distance of Sampras, it has all gone horribly wrong.

Jana Novotna, the Wimbledon champion, and Steffi Graf, seeded No 5, will renew their long rivalry in the quarter-finals here after easy wins yesterday. Graf dropped only one game in beating Ai Sugiyama, of Japan, while Novotna also won in straight sets.

LINKS

WEBSITES:
www.champions-cup.com



Henman bends low to retrieve a forehand during his defeat of Arazi in straight sets

GOLF

Olazabal pleads for Garcia's defence

FROM MEL WEBB IN MALAGA

IF THERE is one thing at which José María Olazábal is an acknowledged expert, aside from hitting a golf ball rather well, it is dealing with that most dogged and persistent of breeds, the journalist. A focus of media attention since he was knee-high to a sand-wedge, he knows more than most about the press breathing hotly down his neck and it was with the wisdom born of experience that he appealed yesterday for peace and space for his precociously brilliant young compatriot, Sergio García.

García, 19, is the Olazábal of the Nineties. Olazábal won the Amateur Championship; García is the present champion.

Olazábal played in the Masters as an amateur; García will do so next month.

Olazábal was regarded as the next Ballesteros; García is seen as the next Olazábal.

Olazábal has achieved what García is expected to. The parallels are obvious and striking.

"Sergio has the potential to become a great player, but he is still very young," Olazábal said as he prepared for the Turespaña Masters, which starts at the Parador Malaga del Golf today.

"He needs to be left alone to gain experience; I think the less we talk about him at the moment, the better. When I came onto the tour, Severiano and other experienced players said the same things about me and they helped me a lot by doing that.

"This is all I can do now for Sergio. I know the press want to have new stars and new people to talk about, but it does make it difficult for young players sometimes.

"This is what has happened to Justin Rose, who I think has great potential, but he has not been helped by people always wanting to talk about him and write about him.

"These young guys need to be left alone, otherwise it will become much more difficult for them."

Olazábal has long since passed the point where he needs a *cordon sanitaire* to be built around him; he plays today with Costantino Rocca and Darren Clarke, who are hardly minor stars in the golfing firmament themselves, but the eyes of the gallery will be beamed, exclusively on him.

If young García, who is playing here, needs to know about handling the arc-light of celebrity, he could do worse than talk to the man they call Chema, or the one they call Seve.

Ballesteros comes into the tournament in no sort of form, but it has been thus for three or four years. At least he has the consolation of knowing exactly how he is regarded in his native land. He is still suffused, two months on, by the warm glow induced by a grand dinner that was thrown for him in Madrid to celebrate his 25th year as a professional.

Everybody from the Infanta Cristina, daughter of King Juan Carlos, through various high-ranking Government sorts to his fellow professionals were present and there were even videotaped contributions from Messrs Player, Palmer and Nicklaus.

One day, this could all be Sergio García's, but, before he can run with champions, he must first be allowed to learn to walk.



Olazábal: wise words

Davies prepares to quicken her draw

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN TUCSON, ARIZONA

LAURA DAVIES has come to Tucson, Arizona, for the Welch's/Circle K Championship, which starts today, but the former world No 1 has not moseyed into town expecting to clean up. In fact, she is expecting to hightail it up the trail to Phoenix at the weekend.

"I've missed the cut eight out of the last ten years," Davies, who was champion here in 1988, said. "The course was a lot softer and lusher then. It's like a rock now and very short."

Davies, who is not renowned for being at home on the range, spent more than an hour hitting balls on Tuesday afternoon — probably close to a personal best. She was refreshed after a week of sun and surf in Australia. Her catch of the day while deep sea fishing was a 20lb yellow-fin tuna.

However, there has been precious little to celebrate so far on the turf, with a tie for seventh easily her best finish and a lowly 77th her worst, but she has not missed a cut and was far from despondent yesterday. "Nothing good's happened," she said, "but it's very close to good."

Boot Hill is not too far from here, but reports of Davies's demise are surely as premature as the burying of the women's European tour, whose tombstone featured on the cover of the British magazine *Golf World* recently. "Very constructive," was Davies's acerbic comment.

She has more faith in the new management. "They have a proven track record. I'm full of confidence this year. These people are going to get it right."

BOWLS

Scots overcome initial doubts

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

ALTHOUGH Scotland are the defending British team champions, their demeanour as they stepped on to the green at Bournemouth yesterday was uncharacteristically tentative, because several of their leading players had declared themselves unavailable for the home international series this winter.

A combative Wales team matched them for the first three hours, but the Scots, showing their customary ability to pull the shots out of the bag at the right time, finished with a flourish and left the green with a spring in their step, winners by 29 shots.

The absence, for "business reasons", of such stalwarts as Richard Corsie, David Gourlay and Paul Foster — all former world champions — may have weakened the side, but Scottish skill and spirit were there in abundance.

Alex Marshall, who won the world title in Norfolk in January, skipped his rink to a telling 29-11 win over a Wales quartet skipped by Robert Weale, while the dependable Graham Robertson returned a 21-9 card against Jason Greenslade.

Graeme Archer and Willie Wood added more modest victories, while Robert Marshall, the brother of the new world champion, fought out a 17-17 tie with Mark Anstey, the 1998 Welsh singles champion, leaving David Harding to record the only win for Wales.

Wood, now 62, is playing as well as ever. The Scotland captain, he led by example, scoring a single on the last end to beat John Price's quartet 17-16.

Wales fielded five new caps in the exposed position of lead, but the youngsters acquitted themselves well. Indeed, a surprise result seemed to be on the cards when the Welsh closed to 88-85 and threatened to go ahead for the first time.

Scotland chose that moment to strike, scoring four fours and a five on the run-in, and collected 33 shots to seven over the last 17 ends to win 121-92 — a more than satisfactory start to the defence of their title.

RESULTS: Scotland bt Wales 121-92 (Rink scores, Scotland skips first): W Wood 17, J Price 16; G Robertson 21, J Greenslade 9; G Archer 20, J Webber 16; J Muir 17, D Harding 23; R Marshall 17, M Anstey 17; A Marshall 29, R Weale 11

SNOOKER: HENDRY BEATS FORTUNATE PATH THROUGH TO QUARTER-FINALS

Davis comes down with the blues

FROM PHIL YATES IN SHANGHAI

STEVE DAVIS, who once famously benefited from one of the most stunning unforced errors in the game's history, committed one himself when losing 5-4 to Stephen Hendry in the last 16 of the China International here last night.

In the final of the 1985 United Kingdom championship, Davis launched his recovery from 13-8 adrift to beat Willie Thorne 16-14 after Thorne missed an elementary blue. He is still regularly reminded of the error and Davis knows now how badly Thorne felt.

He looked destined to defeat Hendry in a world-ranking tournament for the first time since a 10-4 victory in the final of the European Open in 1993.

Davis also led by 28 points in the seventh frame with only the colours remaining, but Hendry obtained the snooker that he required and eventually cleared green to black to remain in the hunt. The Scot also managed to snatch the eighth frame, after a couple of scares, with a yellow-to-pink clearance.

Momentum in the decider ebbed and flowed, but when Davis cleared from the last two reds to brown, he appeared certain to provide the quarter-final opposition for John Parrott. Astoundingly, though, he missed a routine blue off its spot. Even then, Hendry had plenty to do. He negotiated a thin-cut blue, potted a difficult pink from distance and, with the cue-ball tight under the side cushion, did well to roll the black into a top-corner pocket.

Davis, who went to his room for 20 minutes before confronting the media, managed to retain his sense of humour. "Sorry I'm late. I've just been upstairs trying to kill myself," he said.

Hendry said: "The honest truth is that Steve deserved to win. I'm a very fortunate person."

Billy Snaddon highlighted a surprise 5-3 win over Ronnie O'Sullivan with a 118 break. John Higgins whitewashed Matthew Stevens and Mark Williams was a similarly emphatic first-round winner against Dominic Dale.







Davis's mistake ruined a much-improved performance

TRIATHLON

London in line for world event

BY DAVID POWELL

LONDON has emerged as the International Triathlon Union's (ITU) first-choice location for the world championships this year, now that the governing body has washed its hands of the original venue in Germany. "We have three options — Cancun (Mexico), Montreal and London," Mike Gilmore, the ITU managing director, said yesterday. "But, emotionally, London is our clear preference."

Gilmore is in London for five days of talks and site inspections. "I came to see if we could put all the pieces of the pie together and we are trying to make it happen," he said.

If agreement can be reached, the world championships would be staged in conjunction with the London Triathlon on September 18 and 19. Gilmore was due to meet the management committee of the British Triathlon Association (BTA) last night. "In principle, we like the idea, but we need to know the details of what it involves," Elaine Shaw, the BTA chief executive, said.

"In our hearts, we want to go for it, but we have to look at the risks to make sure that, if we take it on, we can do it properly, that we can afford to do it, that we get long-term benefit and that it is the right thing for our elite athletes."

The need to find a replacement for Munich arose when the ITU and the German federation found that they could not work together. "London appeals," Gilmore said, "because it is a communications centre of the world with a lot of corporate sponsors we would like to have a look at this sport." The cost is the trickiest problem to overcome, but, if a deal can be struck, it would mean that Simon Lessing, of Great Britain, would be defending his world title before home support.

The London Triathlon is among the largest mass participation triathlons in the world. "For the normal triathlete, to be running in what may be potentially the world championships makes becoming part of the London Triathlon even more attractive," Michael Smithwick, the London event manager, said. For entry forms, contact the London Triathlon on 0171-928-5055.

SQUASH

Duffield lose grip on title with home defeat

TSM Duffield, the defending champions, have failed narrowly to qualify for the quarter-finals of the SRA National League next week after losing their last home match in group A (Colin McQuillan writes).

The Derbyshire team needed to beat Manchester Northern 5-0 to stay in the reckoning, but, instead, they lost 3-2. It meant that UNW Northumberland, despite losing 4-1 against Capital One Nottingham — whose victory secured them top place in the group — clung to the second qualifying place. Jane Martin, the England No 3, kept Northumberland in the hunt with a fine win over Thea Harvey.

UK Packaging and Potters Bar emerged as the top clubs from group B, Potters Bar ensuring qualification with a 3-2 victory at home against Ashursts Loughborough that owed much to a third-string recovery by Jamie Davis, who defeated Duncan Walsh 10-15, 7-15, 15-12, 15-9, 15-13.

The significant performance in group C was provided by Stephanie Brind, of Aspect Chichester, who defeated Tegwen Malik, the Welsh champion, 9-10, 9-2, 9-0, 9-4 to maintain her record as the only undefeated player in the group matches. The 3-2 win for Chichester over Devon and Exeter made sure that they finished second to UniS Guildford, the group winners.

In the quarter-finals next Tuesday, Nottingham meet Edgbaston Priory, Potters Bar play Chichester, Guildford entertain Northumberland and UK Packaging are at home to Devon and Exeter.

CRICKET

West Indies delay choice of captain

WEST Indies have selected an initial squad of 19 for the World Cup in England, but have not nominated a captain. Brian Lara is unlikely to remain in charge unless there is a vastly improved showing in the second Test match against Australia, which starts in Jamaica on Saturday.

West Indies lost the first Test in Port of Spain by 312 runs after they were dismissed for 51 in the second innings, their lowest score in Test cricket. In the World Cup, they are grouped with Pakistan, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Scotland and Australia.

Another blow for a struggling team is that Shivnarine Chanderpaul, who has a Test average of 43, will be unable to to return on Saturday as had been hoped. He has still not recovered from torn ligaments in his right shoulder, an injury received on the tour of South Africa.

WORLD CUP SQUAD: B C Lara, C L Hooper, K L T Arthurton, R D Jacobs, R N Lewis, J C Adams, C A Walsh, S Ragoonath, S C Williams, J R Murray, M Dillon, C E L Ambrose, S Chanderpaul, R D King, N C McGarrell, D R E Joseph, H R Bryan, C B Lambert, P V Simmons.

Derbyshire waiting for new committee

BY RICHARD HOBSON

DERBYSHIRE will be in a state of flux for the first two months of the new season after members succeeded in bringing down the county's committee en bloc. Although the 14 members of the board confirmed yesterday that they will resign after a vote of no confidence at a special meeting on Tuesday, elections will not take place until June.

It means that Colin Wells, the new cricket manager, will begin his tenure at the County Ground amid uncertainty over the long-term direction of the club.

There are also fresh doubts over £3 million plans to redevelop the Grandstand, bought from Wolverhampton and Dudley Breweries to secure the future of the ground.

Because the club rules adopted last year make no provision for elections outside the annual meeting, Derbyshire have to convene another special meeting to pass the necessary amendments. Nevertheless, David Griffin, who organised the no confidence *motion, which was carried by* 501 votes to 348, is unhappy that members of the present comittee will remain in power until new people are in place.

"They could do a lot of damage between now and June," Griffin said. "The club can be run perfectly adequately by the professional people who are paid to do just that. It shows the old committee is not listening to the members even now."

What began as a campaign to support Dominic Cork, the captain, in a dispute against Harold Rhodes, a committee member, and Andy Hayhurst, the former director of coaching and development, over authority on playing matters escalated into a broader condemnation of the running of the club when Cork withdrew his threat to leave.

"Potentially, we will have a committee of 14 new people, so this must be seen as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity rather than a recipe for disaster," Griffin, who has failed to win election in the past, said.

SWIMMING

Hickman at head of strong team

GREAT Britain is to send a full-strength team of 38 to the world short-course swimming championships in Hong Kong from April 1 to 4 (Craig Lord writes). Their mission will be to exceed the medal tally of British athletes at the world indoor championships in Japan last week and so attract a greater share of lottery funding.

James Hickman was Britain's only winner at the 1997 championships and his prospects of successfully defending his 200 metres butterfly title, and adding the 100 metres crown to his list of honours look bright. The Commonwealth champion is unbeaten over 200 metres since 1977.

Paul Palmer, an Olympic silver medal-winner in 1996, Mark Foster, Adam Whitehead and Susan Rolph, also have medal prospects.

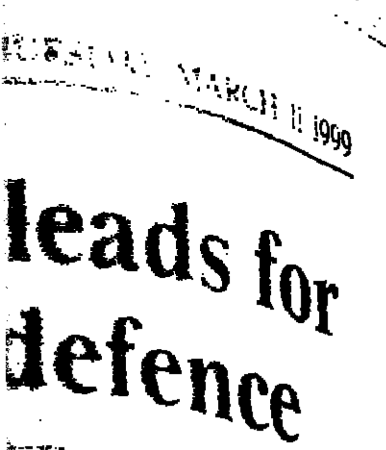
GREAT BRITAIN TEAM: Men: S Brinn, A Clayton, M Foster, S Handley, J Hickman, M Kidd, D Mew, P Palmer, M Harris, G Meadows, A Ruckwood, N Shackell, E Sinclair, G Smith, M Spackman, A Whitehead, N Willey, I Wilson. Women: Z Baker, S Collings, R Cooke, R Corner, H Don-Duncan, H Earp, C Foot, L Hindmarch, V Horner, C Huddart, N Jackson, K Jeggins, J King, K Legg, M Pedder, K Pickering, S Rolph, R Saxton, A Sheppard.

SPORT IN BRIEF

■ ICE HOCKEY: Ayr Scottish Eagles play host to Newcastle Riverkings tonight in the first of the Sekonda Superleague play-offs. The early favourites are Manchester Storm, the Superleague champions, who have lost just twice at home all season, and Cardiff Devils, who spent much of the regular season battling with Manchester to finish top of the table, eventually finishing in second place. The eight clubs will be divided into two groups of four, with teams playing each other twice. The top two teams from each pool qualify for the semi-final knockout stage in Manchester on April 3, with the final taking place the following day.

■ RUGBY LEAGUE: The cancellation of a one-off match between Great Britain and New Zealand in Johannesburg should not detract from the success of the British delegation at the Rugby League International Federation in getting the tri-nations series this autumn and the 2000 World Cup in the four home countries and France back on track (Christopher Irvine writes). Britain will play Australia in Brisbane on October 23 and New Zealand in Auckland a week later. The final will be in Sydney on either November 6 or 7.

■ CYCLING: Stuart O'Grady of Australia held on to his overall lead in the Paris-Nice stage race yesterday, despite an attack on his control of the race by Laurent Roux, of France, who went on to register the first home victory of this year's race, in Vichy. Roux went on the attack more than 50 kilometres from the finish and was soon joined by six other riders. With the field chasing hard, Roux, 26, finally won by only a handful of seconds.



RUGBY UNION

Newcastle to reveal new board structure

By David Hands, rugby correspondent

NEWCASTLE Falcons will announce today the revised management structure for the club after the withdrawal last month of Cameron Hall Developments, the majority shareholder. The arrangements boost the morale not only of the Newcastle squad, which won the 1998 Allied Dunbar Premiership, but also that of other first-division clubs, who have watched with dismay recent events at Newcastle and Richmond, whose backer, Ashley Levett, is also pulling out.

David Thompson, a millionaire, who retired from Druid Management Systems two years ago, has bought the Cameron Hall holding and will chair a new board, which also includes Paul Mackings. That could prove to be a significant development, since Mackings, another millionaire businessman, has strong ties with West Hartlepool, the bottom club in the first division.

John Gray, the secretary of the Newcastle Gosforth Shareholders' Association, joins the board alongside Rob Andrew, the club's director of rugby. A special meeting of the club will be held to explain the revised arrangements to members.

Sir John Hall's intervention in rugby union 3½ years ago leaves the North East with a vibrant force. His company's withdrawal effectively writes off a £5 million investment and leaves the rugby club to fend for itself but with prime assets in the shape of its players and the base at Kingston Park.

The Rugby Football Union (RFU), whose relationships with the senior clubs have improved substantially, can expect a stiff retort from Leicester after the latest round of disciplinary decisions. Leicester's rugby committee met last night in the wake of RFU decisions on Monday to suspend Austin Healey for eight weeks (of which three have already been served) after a "reckless" stamping incident, but to quash the white card awarded to Martin Johnson when he was sin-binned in the cup game with Richmond.

"We will be talking to the RFU on a number of fronts," Peter Wheeler, Leicester's chief executive, said.

Leicester's point is that the RFU disciplinary panel found that Johnson, the club captain and England lock, should not have been sin-binned by Steve Lander, the referee, who, as a professional official, is also now an employee of the union.

It would be a relief to England's first division clubs if Cardiff and Swansea made peace with the Welsh Rugby Union, whose general committee meets tonight to decide action to be taken for non-payment of fines imposed on the two breakaway Welsh clubs. Only an annual meeting of the union can expel the pair, but they could be ejected from the SWALEC Cup this season.

France, beaten by Wales last Saturday, have made four changes to the squad to play against England on March 20 at Twickenham. Pascal Jordani, the uncapped Dax centre, steps up alongside Christophe Dominici and Christophe Juillet, the wing and No 8 respectively from Stade Français, and Marc de Rougemont, the experienced Begles-Bordeaux hooker. Ireland, who play Scotland, have recalled Jonathan Bell and Trevor Brennan in a 23-man squad.

FRANCE SQUAD: Backs: E Ntamack, C Dominici, T Lombard, X Garbajosa, F Comba, P Jordana, T Castaignède, D Aucagne, P Carbonneau, C Laussucq. Forwards: C Califano, S Marconnet, F Tournaire, R Ibanez, M de Rougemont, D Auradou, O Brouzet, F Pelous, T Castel, C Juillet, T Lievremont, O Magne.

IRELAND SQUAD: Backs: C O'Shea, J Bishop, G Dempsey, K Maggs, R Henderson, J Bell, D Humphreys, E Elwood, C McGuinness, C Scally. Forwards: P Clohessy, P Wallace, J Fitzpatrick, K Wood, R Nesdale, P Johns, J Davidson, M Galwey, T Brennan, A Ward, D O'Cuinneagain, V Costello, E Miller.



NICK RAY

The three days of racing in Cheltenham's incomparable arena next week are the culmination of nine months of hard graft for Hammond

Preparing a perfect party for 50,000

SARAH POTTER



The National Hunt Festival comes under starter's orders at Cheltenham on Tuesday and 150,000 punters are expected to visit in high spirits. For the revellers, it is a party over too quickly. The Irish, who flood the Cotswold town in their tens of thousands, pledge to return even before they have left, while the victorious let their thoughts linger in the winner's enclosure long after the horses have been led home to their stables.

A few, though, will breathe a sigh of relief when the finish line is reached. Among them, Rosemary Hammond, 56, the racecourse's club secretary since 1981. For her, the most prestigious date on the National Hunt calendar means nine months of hard graft. "If there's anything that's saleable, I sell it," she said.

Indeed, every application for a badge or ticket is handled by Hammond. She sells the corporate boxes in the grandstand, chalets in the tented village, which entertain groups of 24 people, and restaurant bookings at £400 per head. She is in contact with all the trainers and owners and is on duty at the front desk on race days.

"I don't have much interest in the horses," she said, "but I do get quite excited on Gold Cup day, when 12,000 cars are out there and the folk are coming in. I feel the build-up because my side of the job is like planning a party, except you're inviting 50,000 people. Ninety per cent are here to enjoy themselves, but a few want to cause annoyance."

It seems unthinkable that anyone would want to abuse this amiable lady, but it has happened. "Things can go wrong," Hammond said. "Even if someone gets out of their car and falls in the mud, it's got to be somebody's fault. Occasionally, we have sent out the wrong badges and if the customer hasn't told us beforehand, they'll turn up and start screaming abuse before we can draw breath."

Sadly, well-heeled owners and trainers are not above putting in the metaphorical boot. Ever resourceful, Hammond has a way of dealing with braying accents raised unreasonably in her direction.

"If you shut your eyes, all the whaa-whaa voices actually sound like ducks," she said. "It amuses me and takes away the tension. They're acting out a part, a lot of them. Some are living in the past."

Demand outstrips supply on Gold Cup day, so some of the excluded public come up with ingenious scams to get in through the gates. "I can't say we've had anyone dressed as a jockey," she said, "but some without tickets try and get in by carrying a plastic bucket and sponge. We've also had people slip into the disabled area where they'll sit with a blanket round their knees until the end of the race, when they'll get up and walk off.

"Another gentleman always makes out he's blind and waves a white stick around. We know he's not blind, but he does it as a kind of challenge. When I tell him I'm fed up with him, he wanders off like Colonel Blimp."

Hammond claims that such behaviour no longer shocks her. She does, though, feel sympathy for some. "We get stable lads who come with a postcard from the trainer, saying: 'Please allow my employee in.' Unfortunately, we don't accept those. It's sad because they work with and love the horses and don't get paid much."

She will not, though, be bothered if the players from one particular football club never return. "The box had glass all over the floor and upturned tables," Hammond said. "When I went to check if everything was all right, the agent who'd taken their booking just said: 'The police are on their way.'" Law enforcement and security cost the organisers £250,000 over the three days.

For Hammond, the best moment of the year is being on the front lawn for the finish of the Gold Cup. "It's the place to be," she said. "You can feel the ground shake as the horses approach." She once won £300 on Norton's Coin, the 1990 Gold Cup-winner, but claims not to have any favourite horses. "For me, it's the atmosphere that's addictive." Let the party begin.

BADMINTON

Haughton responds to the selectors

By Richard Eaton

COLIN HAUGHTON, who was excluded from the England Commonwealth Games squad last year, offered a sharp response with a notable victory on the opening day of the centenary Yonex All-England championships at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham yesterday.

Haughton built himself an excellent platform from which to launch any criticism of the selectors with a 12-15, 15-3, 15-4 victory over Abhin Gupta, of India.

It was Gupta who effectively prevented England from winning the Commonwealth silver medal when he defeated Peter Knowles, who was preferred to Haughton.

"I would have beaten him in the Commonwealth Games, too," Haughton said. "I hope now I'll be picked for the world championships [in Copenhagen in May]."

Haughton, from Lancashire, won despite letting slip a lead of 12-10 in the first game. He used his fitness to establish a base from which to pressurise the Indian, keeping the rallies long and fast and waiting for his opponent to make mistakes. The result will give Haughton's confidence a considerable boost and he may be able to nudge the selectors again today by reaching the third round, for, instead of meeting Peter Rasmussen, the world champion from Denmark, who has withdrawn, he meets Martin Delfs, a 19-year-old qualifier, also from Denmark, who is a part-time player and who may be tired.

Delfs played six times in the qualifying events on Tuesday followed by a win in the first round yesterday over Rehan Khan, Germany.

Earlier, Simon Archer and Joanne Goode, who reached the final of the world grand prix championships 11 days ago, almost fell at the first hurdle this time when they trailed 10-12 in the final game against Zhang Jun and Gao Ling, an unseeded pair from China, before surviving and going on to win 8-15, 15-6, 15-12.

"We were really up against it and it was just a bit of mental strength which got us through," Archer said.

FOR THE RECORD

BADMINTON

BIRMINGHAM: All-England championships: Men: Singles: First round: B Santoso (Indo) bt M Beres (Can) 15-7, 15-5; R Sidek (Malaysia) bt Chen Hong (China) 0-15, 17-14, 15-7; F Machida (Japan) bt S Pandya (Eng) 15-9, 15-7; K Fangel (Den) bt K Masuda (Japan) 15-7, 15-7; Wong Choong Hann (Malaysia) bt M Edge (Eng) 17-14, 15-5; I Wijaya (Indo) bt J R Andersen (Nor) 17-16, 15-5; H Hendrawan (Indo) bt A Book (Fin) 15-7, 15-12; R Agustinus (Indo) bt A Pohar (Slovenia) 17-16, 15-9; C Haughton (Eng) bt A S Gupta (Indo) 12-15, 15-3, 15-4; T Hidyat (Indo) bt T Westra (Holl) 15-7, 15-6; N Lasmari (Fr) bt M Joppien (Ger) 15-13, 15-4; Park Tae-sang (S Kor) bt N C Kaldau (Den) 7-15, 15-7, 15-9; J Fisher (Den) bt M Grove (Den) 15-9, 15-3; M Dalls (Den) bt R Khan (Ger) 15-11, 15-3; R Kuijten (Bel) bt N Kanetkar (India) 15-3, 15-3; Chen Lei (China) bt S Ohta (Japan) 15-1, 15-8. **Women: Singles: First round:** J Szleszynska (Pol) bt V Hristova (Bul) 5-11, 11-5, 13-12; K Morgan (Wales) wo T Dineen (Eng); Lee Kyung-won (S Kor) bt A Popat (India) 11-6, 11-2; K Yonekura (Japan) bt M Pedersen (Den) 11-0, 11-9; S Wait (Scot) bt L Janssen (Holl) 8-11, 11-4, 11-1.

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Charlotte 106 Boston 87; New York 88 Milwaukee 87, Minnesota 85 Seattle 84; Chicago 103 New Jersey 87; Dallas 91 Phoenix 103; Houston 84 Denver 75; Utah 88 Cleveland 75; Portland 103 Sacramento 98; Golden State 92 Vancouver 82; Los Angeles Clippers 99 Los Angeles Lakers 103.

BOWLS

BOURNEMOUTH: British Isles indoor championships: Fours: Final: J Forey, R Morgan, N Leigh and J Webley (Cardiff) bt T Mitchell, P Talbot, D Robinson and B Morley (Nottingham) 22-11

CYCLING

PARIS-NICE RACE: Fourth stage (Nevers to Vichy, 201.5km): 1, L Roux (Fr) 5hr 4min 46sec; 2, J Planckaert (Bel) at 8sec; 3, S Heulot (Fr); 4, J Voigt (Ger); 5, P Savoldelli (It); 6, M den Bakker (Holl) all same time. **British placing:** 114, C Boardman 9min 46sec. **Leading overall positions:** 1, S O'Grady (Aus) 15hr 42min 58sec; 2, A Tchmil (Bel) at 7sec; 3, R Sorensen (Den) 24; 4, Den Bakker 28; 5, M Wauters (Bel) 31; 6, A Merckx (Bel) 32. **British placing:** 75, Boardman 11:35.

FOOTBALL

UEFA UNDER-18 CHAMPIONSHIP: Preliminary qualifying group: England 8 Andorra 0.

Tuesday's late results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Arsenal 3 Sheffield Wednesday 0.
NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Bolton 3 Barnsley 3; Bradford 0 Sunderland 1; Bristol City 1 Bury 1; Crystal Palace 3 Ipswich 2; Norwich 3 Port Vale 4; Oxford Utd 2 Huddersfield 2; Portsmouth 1 Sheff Utd 0; Stockport 2 Swindon 1; Tranmere 0 Birmingham 1. **Second division:** Bournemouth 1 Bristol Rovers 0; Burnley 0 Man City 6; Colchester 2 Oldham 2; Luton 0 Fulham 4; Macclesfield 1 Gillingham 0. **Third division:** Barnet 1 Carlisle 0; Brentford 3 Peterborough 0; Brighton 0 Cardiff 2; Cambridge Utd 2 Hull 0; Chester 1 Scarborough 3; Plymouth 0 Torquay 0; Swansea 2 Darlington 0.
AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD: Southern section: Final, first leg: Millwall 1 Walsall 0.
NATIONWIDE CONFERENCE: Cheltenham 2 Hereford 2; Hayes 0 Forest Green 3; Kettering 4 Farnborough 1; Kingstonian 1 Kidderminster 0; Rushden and Diamonds 2 Stevenage 1.
SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Third division: Dumbarton 1 Albion 1; Ross County 2 Brechin 1.
UEFA UNDER-18 CHAMPIONSHIP: Preliminary qualifying group: Northern Ireland 1 Ireland 2.
FA UMBRO TROPHY: Fifth-round replay: Southport 1 Woking 0
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Altrincham 3 Runcorn 0; Colwyn Bay 2 Hyde 1, Leigh RMI 3 Guiseley 2.
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Dorchester 2 Burton 1; Gloucester 2 Merthyr 1. **Midland division:** Moor Green 2 Clevedon 3. **Southern division:** Bashley 2 Witney 3. **League Cup: Fourth round:** Cambridge City 0 St Leonards 0.
RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Carshalton 3 Aylesbury 3; Enfield 3 Basingstoke 2; Gravesend and Northfleet 0 Hendon 1; Hampton 0 Harrow 0. **First division:** Berkhamsted 0 Oxford City 2; Leyton Pennant 2 Leatherhead 1; Staines 2 Croydon 1; Wembley 0 Chertsey 3; Whyteleafe 1 Bognor Regis 1; Worthing 0 Yeading 1. **Second division:** Abingdon 2 Hemel Hempstead 5, Edgware 0 Harlow 3, Hungerford 1 Wivenhoe 2, Tooting and Mitcham 3 Hertford 1; Wokingham 3 Northwood 0. **Third division:** Camberley 3 Croydon 0; East Thurrock 3, Tilbury 2; Egham 1 Wingate and Finchley 2; Ford United 3 Kingsbury 0; Hornchurch 1 Lewes 3. **Puma Cup: Fourth round:** Dulwich Hamlet 1 Wealdstone 0; Hitchin 0 Purfleet 2.
COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Cove 1 Godalming and Guildford 4; Raynes Park Vale 0 Ash 1; Reading 1 Westfield 1; Walton Casuals 1 Hartley Wintney 1.
NORTH WESTERN TRAINS LEAGUE: First division: Atherton LR 1 Ramsbottom 0; Leek CSOB 2 Cheadle 0; Vauxhall GM 4 Salford 0.
ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Dudley Sports 1 Handrahan Timbers 5.
ISTHMIAN LEAGUE CUP: Third round: Chesham 0 Bromley 3. **Fourth round:** Boreham Wood 5 Marlow 1; Maidenhead 5 Sutton 3.
JEWSON LEAGUE: Premier division: Harwich and Parkeston 1 Woodbridge 5
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Bemerton Heath Harl 1 AFC Newbury 3; Wimborne 5 Downton 0.
LEAGUE OF WALES: Afan Lido 0 Barry 0; Caersws 3 Total Net Sol 1.
NORTH WESTERN TRAINS LEAGUE: Floodlit Trophy: Semi-final, second leg: Curzon Ashton 1 Kidsgrove 2.
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bridport 2 Tiverton 1; Mangotsfield 0 Keynsham 0, Odd Down 5 Calne 3.
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Fifth round: Aston Villa 2 Watford 0.
DUTCH CUP: Quarter-finals: Eindhoven W 0 PSV Eindhoven 5, Fortuna Sittard 3 Emmen 1.
FRENCH LEAGUE: Nancy 2 Bordeaux 3; Sochaux 0 Marseilles 0.
GERMAN CUP: Semi-final: Rot-Weiss Oberhausen 1 Bayern Munich 3
ITALIAN CUP: Semi-final, second leg: Parma 2 Internazionale 1 (Parma win 4-1 on agg)

HOCKEY

VARSITY MATCH (at Milton Keynes): **Women:** Cambridge 4 Oxford 1.
INTERNATIONAL MATCH: South Africa 1 Australia 3 (in Potchefstroom)

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Boston 2 Florida 0; Washington 2 Colorado 6 (OT); New York Islanders 2 Philadelphia 2 (OT); Pittsburgh 2 New Jersey 3; Toronto 6 Tampa Bay 1; St Louis 4 Calgary 7, Los Angeles 4 Detroit 2; San Jose 4 Phoenix 2.

RUGBY LEAGUE

VARSITY MATCH (at Athletic Ground, Richmond). Cambridge 14 Oxford 10.

RUGBY UNION

WELSH LEAGUE: Premier division: Ebbw Vale 52 Aberavon 17, Llanelli 47 Bridgend 11. **First division:** Cross Keys 10 Pontypool 6.
CLUB MATCH: Sale 3 Scottish Districts 27.
AIB LEAGUE: Second division: Ballynahinch 8 Malone 7.

SAILING

CLIPPER ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE: Overall positions (after leg 3d): 1, Ariel (A Thomson) 9.5pts; 2, Chrysolite (T Hedges) 28.5; 3, Antiope (K Harris) 30; 4, Mermerus (B Sollars) 31; 5, Thermopylae (M Tod) 33.5; 6, Serica (R Dean) 36; 7, Taeping (N Fleming) 39.5.

SNOOKER

SHANGHAI: China International: First round: M Williams (Wales) bt D Dale (Wales) 5-0; A McManus (Scot) bt C Small (Scot) 5-3. **Second round:** S Lee (Eng) bt P Ebdon (Eng) 5-3; J Higgins (Scot) bt M Stevens (Wales) 5-0; J Parrott (Eng) bt N Bond (Eng) 5-1; K Doherty (Ire) bt A Hamilton (Eng) 5-3; S Hendry (Scot) bt S Davis (Eng) 5-4, W Snaddon (Scot) bt R O'Sullivan (Eng) 5-3.

SQUASH

SRA NATIONAL LEAGUE: Group A: UNW Northumberland 1 Capital One Nottingham 4; TSM Oulfield 2 Manchester Northern 3. **Group B:** Edgbaston Priory 4 Bishop's Stortford 1, Potters Bar 3 Ashursts Loughborough 2. **Group C:** Aspect Chichester 3 Devon and Exeter 2, UWIC Cardiff 4 Lee-on-Solent 1.
NATIONAL SUPER LEAGUE: Dunraven Windows Maesteg 2 Halifax Insurance 1 (A Gough lost to M Berrett 9-3, 3-9, 9-6, 4-9, 5-9; M Cairns bt L Beachill 9-2, 4-9, 9-5, 9-5, D Evans bt D Campion 9-6, 9-4, 9-5)

TABLE TENNIS

GREAT YARMOUTH: English Open: Men: Singles: Second stage qualifying round: E Walker (Scot) bt R Jenkins (Wales) 12-21, 21-15, 22-20. S Milisevic (Yug) bt D Stake (Eng) 21-15, 21-9; P Nilsson (Swe) bt A Rushton (Eng) 21-13, 21-6; M Dzubanski (Pol) bt M Chan (Eng) 21-7, 21-17, T Miller (Switz) bt D Barham (Eng) 21-9, 21-7, Yoo Seung Min (S Kor) bt M James (Eng) 21-7, 21-7; T Krzeszewski (Pol) bt M Essomba (Cameroon) 21-13, 21-12; O Marmurek (Fr) bt M Isherwood (Eng) 21-13, 21-14, K Shinnosuke (Japan) bt T Young (Eng) 20-22, 21-13, 21-17; R Casares (Sp) bt A Baggaley (Eng) 21-19, 21-17, A Robertson (Wales) bt A Perry (Eng) 21-17, 21-15; O Marmurek (Fr) bt R Jenkins (Wales) 21-14, 21-15, K Jindrak (Austria) bt D Barham (Eng) 21-6, 21-16, C Cabestany (Fr) bt M James (Eng) 21-18, 21-11; E Walker (Scot) bt M Isherwood (Eng) 21-13, 21-12; D Wintersdorf (Lux) bt T Cutler (Eng) 21-13, 21-18; Cheng Yuan Su (Taiwan) bt T Young (Eng) 20-22, 21-14, 21-9; G Herbert (Eng) bt V Piacentini (It) 21-18, 25-23, 22-20. **Women: Singles: Second stage qualifying round:** P Cade (Can) bt S Davies (Wales) 21-4, 21-3; B Daunton (Wales) bt J Barraclough (Eng) 21-14, 21-8, H Halas (Slovenia) bt G Schwartz (Eng) 19-21, 21-7, 21-16, S Ganina (Russ) bt N Bawden (Eng) 21-9, 21-15; Z Molnar (Hun) bt K Parker (Eng) 21-12, 21-10; S Zhou (Aus) bt K Lockwood (Eng) 21-8, 21-8; L Nordenberg (Swe) bt S Ruocco (Eng) 21-14, 19-21, 21-14, Suk Sol Ji (S Kor) bt K Owolabi (Eng) 12-21, 23-21, 21-12; A Stepankova (Cz) bt L Durrant (Eng) 21-19, 21-10; N Deaton (Eng) bt Jun Hye Kyung (S Kor) 21-18, 21-19.

TENNIS

INDIAN WELLS, California: Champions Cup: First round: T Martin (US) bt T Woodbridge (Aus) 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, K Kucera (Slovakia) bt B Black (Zim) 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, J Gimelstob (US) bt N Escudé (Fr) 2-6, 6-1, 6-1, L Hewitt (Aus) bt M Woodforde (Aus) 4-6, 6-2, 6-4. S Draper (Aus) bt V Spadea (US) 7-6, 6-4; G Ivanisevic (Cro) bt A Berasategui (Sp) 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, F Meligeni (Br) bt S Lareau (Can) 7-5, 6-2; J-M Gambill (US) bt J Novak (Cz) 6-2, 7-6, C Woodruff (US) bt D Vacek (Cz) 7-5, 4-6, 7-5; J Courier (US) bt F Vicente (Sp) 7-6, 6-4. **Second round:** S Schalken (Holl) bt T Johansson (Swe) 6-3, 6-3; N Kiefer (Ger) bt P Rafter (Aus) 7-6, 3-6, 7-5, G Kuerten (Br) bt Y Kafelnikov (Russ) 0-6, 7-6, 6-3; T Henman (GB) bt H Arazi (Mor) 6-3, 6-3. **WTA Event Cup: Third round:** S Graf (Ger) bt A Sugiyama (Japan) 6-0, 6-1, J Novotna (Cz) bt B Rippner (US) 6-1, 6-4. M Pierce (Fr) bt R Grande (It) 6-1, 6-0; S Williams (US) bt C Black (Zim) 6-0, 7-5.

POOLS DIVIDENDS

BRITTENS: Treble chance: 24pts £1,194.00, 23 £11.95, 22 £1.70. Four draws: £3.40. Five aways: £33.20. Eight homes: £1.20.
LITTLEWOODS: 24pts £42,656.00, 23 £220.70, 22 £17.05, 21 £4.40. Half-time: 20 £164.45. Four draws: £9.45. Nine homes: £8.65. Five aways: £407.60.
VERNONS: 24pts £8,580.90, 23 £81.65, 22 £13.75.
ZETTERS: 24pts £2,704.60, 23 £14.35, 22 £1.80. Four aways: £11.10. Eight homes: £2.10. Four draws: £6.00. Easy six: 19.80. Treble chance: 24 £16.60. Lucky numbers: 24 33 22 17 20 8.

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Runs to Resort	Conditions Off-p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Andorra								
Soldeu	100	110	Good	Slushy	Varied	Sun	-1	8/3
Austria								
Kitzbühel	70	170	Good	Hard	Varied	Fine	6	7/3
Obergurgl	100	330	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	3	8/3
Söll	80	210	Good	Hard	Varied	Fine	5	8/3
Canada								
Lake Louise	150	169	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	-4	7/3
France								
Alpe d'Huez	160	350	Fair	Open	Spring	Fair	-3	8/3
Argentière	100	390	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	3	8/3
Flaine	175	610	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	8	8/3
La Clusaz	95	320	Good	Slushy	Varied	Wind	17	8/3
La Plagne	190	298	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	2	8/3
La Tania	175	297	Good	Open	Varied	Wind	-1	8/3
Les Arcs	197	345	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	4	8/5
Megève	125	300	Good	Slushy	Heavy	Cloud	8	5/3
Méribel	160	295	Good	Open	Heavy	Cloud	7	8/3
Val Thorens	220	370	Good	Open	Varied	Wind	-1	8/3
Val d'Isère	135	315	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-5	10/3
Italy								
Cervinia	160	280	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-1	10/3
Cortina	70	130	Good	Hard	Varied	Cloud	-4	7/3
Livigno	96	212	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-4	9/3
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	170	330	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	8	8/3
Davos	170	315	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	3	7/3
Grindelwald	95	220	Good	Hard	Heavy	Cloud	8	8/3
Klosters	100	290	Good	Open	Crusty	Fine	11	9/3
Mürren	120	490	Good	Closed	Varied	Cloud	4	5/3
Saas Fee	110	410	Good	Slushy	Heavy	Fair	5	7/3
St Moritz	95	205	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	3	6/3
Verbier	95	200	Good	Open	Heavy	Cloud	-8	10/3
Zermatt	120	285	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	8	7/3
United States								
Aspen	128	153	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-1	8/3
Deer Valley	215	240	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	3	8/3

L = lower slopes; U = upper slopes

http://www.skiclub.co.uk

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, bridge correspondent

This hand comes from the Final Trial to select the English teams for the Camrose home international series. North-South were the eventual winners David Price and Tom Townsend. East-West were Georgia and Steve Ray, one of England's most successful mixed pairs.

Dealer West | Love all | IMPs

North: ♠ K 8 6 ♡ Q J 5 2 ◇ 10 9 8 ♣ K 6 5

West: ♠ A J 5 2 ♡ 10 7 6 4 3 ◇ 6 ♣ 10 9 7

East: ♠ Q 10 9 4 3 ♡ A K 9 ◇ Q J 4 3 ♣ 4

South: ♠ 7 ♡ 8 ◇ A K 7 5 2 ♣ A Q J 8 3 2

S	W	N	E
—	Pass	Pass	1 S
2 NT	3 S	Pass	Pass
4 C	Pass	5 C	All Pass

Contract: Five Clubs by South. Lead: ace of spades.

Two No-Trumps was the Unusual No-Trump, showing at least 5-5 in the two lowest-ranking unbid suits, in this case the minors.

East gave an unmistakable suit-preference signal with the queen under the ace of spades at trick one to request a heart switch. West duly switched to the three of hearts, intended to show an odd number. (None the less the ten might have been more helpful.) When declarer put the pressure on by playing low from the dummy East felt unsure about the location of the ten, and put up the king. East's next play of the ace of hearts cost the contract.

Declarer ruffed, drew three rounds of trumps ending in the dummy, and discarded his three losing diamonds on the king of spades and the queen-jack of hearts.

Whatever the merits of West's three of hearts, East's attempt to cash the ace was an error of analysis. Suppose declarer has the hand that presumably she feared:

♠ x
♡ xx
◇ AKxxx
♣ AQJxx

East switches to a trump round to the king. Declarer may pitch his losing heart on the king of spades but to no effect: he still has to lose a diamond at the end to go one down.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.



KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene
Chess correspondent

Sharp games

With Kasparov already assured of first prize in the Linares tournament, the focus of interest has shifted to some fascinating games produced by those lower down in the field.

Although there has been a high incidence of draws in Linares, with the exception of games by Kasparov, the fighting spirit displayed by the players has been intense. Today, I give two examples of such battles.

White: Veselin Topalov
Black: Vassily Ivanchuk
Linares 1999

English Opening

1	Nf3	c5
2	c4	Nc6
3	d4	cxd4
4	Nxd4	e6
5	g3	Bb4+
6	Nc3	Qa5
7	Ndb5	d5
8	a3	Bxc3+
9	bxc3	Nf6
10	Bg2	0-0
11	Qb3	dxc4
12	Qxc4	e5
13	Nd6	Be6
14	Qd3	e4
15	Nxe4	Nxe4
16	Bxe4	Rad8
17	Qc2	Nd4
18	Qb2	Nxe2
19	Kxe2	Rfe8
20	Qb4	Qh5+
21	f3	f5
22	g4	Qh3
23	gxf5	Bxf5
24	Qc4+	Kh8
25	Re1	Rxe4+

White resigns

White: Peter Svidler
Black: Veselin Topalov
Linares 1999

Sicilian Defence

1	e4	c5
2	Nc3	g6
3	Nf3	Bg7
4	d4	cxd4
5	Nxd4	Nc6
6	Be3	Nf6
7	Bc4	0-0
8	Bb3	a5
9	0-0	a4
10	Nxa4	Nxe4
11	Nb5	Ra6
12	Qe2	d6
13	c4	Nf6
14	Rfd1	Bd7
15	Nac3	Qb8
16	h3	Rc8
17	a3	Ne5
18	Rac1	Bxb5
19	cxb5	Ra8
20	b6	Rc6
21	Nb5	Qd8
22	Nc7	Rb8
23	Qb5	Rxc1
24	Rxc1	e6
25	a4	d5
26	a5	Ne4
27	Rd1	Nd6
28	Qc5	Nf5
29	Bc1	Bf8
30	Qc2	Nc6
31	Bd2	Bd6
32	Ba4	Nb4
33	Qb3	Nd4
34	Qe3	Nf5
35	Qb3	Qh4
36	Rc1	Nd4

White resigns

Diagram of final position of the Ivanchuk victory

After 26 fxe4 Bg4+ 27 Kf2 Qxh2+ 28 Ke3 Qg3 is mate.

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by email. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from Times readers will be published either here or in the Saturday Times Weekend column.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

WOBBEGONG
a. Indonesian instrument
b. A shark
c. A folk story

SEMANG
a. A unit of pronunciation
b. A coracle
c. A Malayan

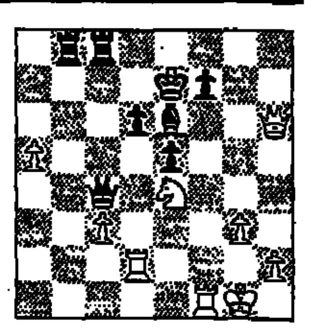
SUNYATA
a. A sun-dried tomato
b. Farewell
c. Avoid

TSANTSA
a. A head
b. A hot spice
c. Ritual humiliation

Answers on page 50

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene



White to play. This position is from the game Brumen-Zelenika, Porec 1998. Black has three pawns and a bishop protecting his king from White's onslaught along the central files. However, these prove to be hopelessly inadequate. How did White continue?

Solution on page 50

FOOTBALL

Sunderland gaze down on tussle for second place

By Russell Kempson

AS SUNDERLAND disappear into the wild blue yonder, surely destined to win the Nationwide League first division and qualify for membership of the FA Carling Premiership next season, the chase for the second automatic promotion place grows more intriguing by the match.

It seems to lie between Ipswich Town, Bradford City, Birmingham City or Bolton Wanderers, but, of that quartet, only Birmingham enhanced their chances on Tuesday night, with a 1-0 victory over Tranmere Rovers at Prenton Park. They have lost only once in 14 league outings and Michael Johnson's 46th-minute goal was enough to give them their third win in four matches. Not that Trevor Francis, the hard-to-please Birmingham manager, was particularly satisfied.

"We were dominant and the better side throughout, but the warning signs were always there." Francis said. "We dared not lack concentration and they could have punished us a couple of times. I wanted a second goal to finish it off, but it just wouldn't come. Every forward had a chance to score, but, in the end, it was left to a defender to get us all three points."

Bradford's 1-0 defeat by Sunderland, who are now 12 points clear at the top, blunted their remarkable progress from 21st in September to second position. It was only their second loss in 15 league games. Ipswich also failed to make any headway when they surprisingly succumbed 3-2 to Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park, a reverse that ended a run of four successive wins.

George Burley, the Ipswich manager, remained cautiously optimistic. "We've been in the play-offs for the past two seasons and we're still capable of going up," he said. "A lot may depend on if we can avoid injuries."

TOPS OF TABLES

First division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sunderland	36	23	10	3	69	22	79
Ipswich	36	20	7	9	50	25	67
Bradford	35	19	7	9	58	35	64
Birmingham	36	18	10	8	54	30	64
Bolton	35	16	13	6	65	46	61
West Brom	36	15	8	13	61	54	53

Second division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fulham	34	23	6	5	55	24	75
Preston	34	19	9	6	64	34	66
Walsall	34	19	7	8	46	36	64
Bournemouth	33	17	9	7	55	32	60
Gillingham	34	15	14	5	54	29	59
Man City	34	14	14	6	45	24	56

Third division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cambs Utd	33	19	6	8	57	34	63
Cardiff	34	18	8	8	49	29	62
Brentford	33	18	2	13	56	49	56
Leyton Orient	33	15	11	7	48	38	56
Scunthorpe	32	16	4	12	54	45	52
Mansfield	34	15	7	12	46	46	52
Swansea	33	13	11	9	39	35	50

For Palace, who called in the administrators last week to sort out their tangled finances, it was a welcome respite. "I could never question the commitment and concentrated effort of the players," Steve Coppell, the Palace manager, said. "We felt the Ipswich game was a test and the result has given us a great psychological boost."

Bolton scraped a second consecutive 3-3 draw, this time against Barnsley at the Reebok Stadium, but they have not won in five matches and have conceded three goals in each of their past four games.

"When you go 2-0 up at home, it should be good enough," Colin Todd, the Bolton manager, said, "but we keep digging holes for ourselves. It's not just the defence, it's many aspects that are costing us. There's no magic formula — this is more or less the same team that put together an unbeaten run of 15 games."

At the opposite end of the division, Port Vale edged away from the relegation zone with a 4-3 victory against Norwich City at Carrow Road, ending a run of ten successive away defeats. Ian Bogie, the midfield player, scored the winner three minutes from time. "If we keep performing like that for the rest of the season, we shouldn't have too many problems," Brian Horton, the Vale manager, said.

Oxford United's efforts to move clear of trouble received a setback when Huddersfield Town drew level in the 86th minute at the Manor Ground, when Marcus Stewart scored from the penalty spot.

The draw at Ashton Gate between Bristol City and Bury did neither any favours.

In the second division, Fulham appear to have the title wrapped up, in much the style of Sunderland. They stretched their lead over Preston North End, their nearest rivals, to nine points with 4-0 win against Luton Town at Kenilworth Road. Luton's cause was not helped by the dismissal of Alan White in the 32nd minute.

Bournemouth maintained their unbeaten home record this season and moved above Gillingham into fourth place with a 1-0 success against Bristol Rovers, Eddie Howe scoring the goal midway through the second half. Manchester City extended their unbeaten league run to 12 matches — their best sequence for 23 years — with a 6-0 win against Burnley at Turf Moor, Shaun Goater scoring a hat-trick.

In the third division, Cambridge United stayed a point ahead of Cardiff City at the top by beating Hull City 2-0. Trevor Benjamin and Ian Ashbee scored in the last ten minutes. Cardiff kept up the chase by overcoming Brighton by the same scoreline at Priestfield Stadium, Kevin Nugent and Scott Young scoring in the first half.



Quinn, wearing the injured Sorensen's jersey, prepares to repel Bradford attacks. Photograph: Ross Kinnaird/Allsport

Quinn preserves clean sheet

George Caulkin finds the Ireland striker has kept goal before

THIS time two years ago, Niall Quinn was wondering if he had a future in football. A severe cruciate ligament injury was failing to heal and he was powerless to help as Sunderland struggled in the FA Carling Premiership. The Ireland centre forward was mulling over his options and the paperwork he needed to complete to go into retirement were waiting on his desk for his signature.

Perhaps, he thought, he might follow that well-trodden path into full-time journalism or professional punditry; maybe racing, his other great sporting love, could provide an outlet. It is fair to assume, however, that as he agonised over whether he would ever be able to score goals again, the prospect of preventing them never entered his mind.

Yet twice now the 32-year-old Dubliner has made the transition from poacher to goalkeeper to good effect. On the first occasion, when with Manchester City, he helped to secure a 2-1 victory. On the second, against Bradford City on Tuesday night, he helped Sunderland to move even closer to promotion, which only a complete loss of form can now deny them.

After a 73rd-minute injury to Thomas Sorensen, the goalkeeper, the result of a collision with Lee Mills, Quinn, who had earlier claimed his eighteenth goal of the season, which decided the match, volunteered to deputise until the final whistle. In truth, he had little opportunity for heroics, so competently did the defence perform, but the gesture spoke volumes for Sunderland's team spirit.

"To me, it was a break from the mud and a chance to get away from the attentions of Darren Moore," Quinn said yesterday. "I wasn't getting much out of him. There was a little bit of panic because the goal was in front of our fans, but I told the manager [Peter Reid] not to worry, that nobody was going to score against me. I wasn't nervous and I didn't have to do a thing because of a real show of class from the defence.

"I had been a little bit more involved in my earlier effort. It was against Derby County, I made a couple of saves, held a penalty from Dean Saunders and City won. The best moment came when I ran about 15 yards for a corner, caught the ball one-handed, like Pat Jennings, and knocked over Mark Wright and Mick Harford in the process. That was a great memory."



Quinn celebrates after Tuesday's goal

Although Sunderland are now 12 points ahead of their nearest challengers, Ipswich Town, Quinn insists that there is no complacency in the camp. "I don't want to think about the Premier League," he said. "At half-time in our dressing-room, you wouldn't have thought we were leading the division. It's a small room at Bradford and there was no hiding place from the manager's tongue."

FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

■ England Under-18 stayed on course to qualify for the two-legged intermediary round of the European championship next month when they outclassed Andorra, 8-0, in Spain yesterday.

Joe Cole, of West Ham United, scored his first goal at under-18 level and Scott Parker, of Charlton Athletic, Luke Chadwick, of Manchester United, Darius Vassell, of Aston Villa, Ledley King, of Tottenham Hotspur, Matthew Etherington, of Peterborough United, and Jamie Milligan, of Everton, with two penalties, completed the scoring. England, who drew their opening match, with Spain, 1-1 on Monday, will complete their group programme against Israel on Friday.

■ Roger Mitchell, the chief executive of the Scottish Premier League (SPL), has dismissed speculation that he would wish to fill the vacancy left by Jim Farry, his Scottish Football Association (SFA) counterpart, who was dismissed by the SFA on Monday. Mitchell insisted yesterday: "I would think my philosophy is more in tune with the SPL's objectives than the administration of the SFA." Campbell Ogilvie, the Rangers secretary, said on Tuesday that he would not be leaving Ibrox.

■ Michael Thomas, the former Liverpool and Arsenal midfield player, has been involved in a training-ground incident with a Benfica team-mate. Portuguese newspapers yesterday published blow-by-blow photographs of what was said to have been a fight, which allegedly began after a tough tackle by Thomas on Sergei Kandaurov, of Ukraine. The pair were pulled apart by other players and José Capristano, the Benfica vice-president, described the dispute as "a normal situation".

■ Club chairmen will decide today whether to introduce full-time referees to the FA Carling Premiership next season. The move is being recommended to the 20 Premiership chairmen by a working party of club representatives and Philip Don, the FA Premier League's referees officer.



Doubts about the fragility of Lewis's chin are not shared by Mercer, one of only two men to have met him and Holyfield. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Mercer leans Lewis's way

From Srikumar Sen, boxing correspondent, in New York

HOWEVER much scorn American boxing writers pour on Lennox Lewis's chance of becoming the first British heavyweight to lift the unified world title in 100 years — or, as a New York columnist put it yesterday, "Avoid going horizontal" on "the countless Brits who will be staying up 'til dawn" — when he meets Evander Holyfield at Madison Square Garden on Saturday, Ray Mercer, the one man who should know, thinks Lewis will win.

Mercer is one of only two opponents that Lewis and Holyfield have in common and he gave them both a hard contest. In fact, three years ago at the Garden, many ringsiders thought Mercer should have been given the decision against Lewis. The two had boxed in the Olympic Games in Seoul in 1988 and both won gold medals, Mercer at heavyweight and Lewis at super-heavyweight.

Contrary to general belief, Mercer thinks that Lewis will win on a close decision. Most experts believe that if Lewis does not win in the first half, Holyfield will knock him out in the second. Speaking from his home in North Carolina, Mercer said: "Lewis will have to avoid that left hook of Evander. He hit me and I went down on one knee. That left he has is a monster."

Having Emanuel Steward in his corner, Mercer believes, will make all the difference for Lewis. "He has trained so many champions, Holyfield too, so he will see that Lewis is well prepared and adjusted to fighting Holyfield," Mercer said. "Lewis became a different fighter with Emanuel from what he used to be, when he just wanted to throw the big right hand. Steward worked on his jab for his fight with me and I'm sure he's been working on other things for this fight. Lewis has got a pretty good jab, I was surprised how good it was."

RING OF TRUTH

HOLYFIELD VERSUS LEWIS

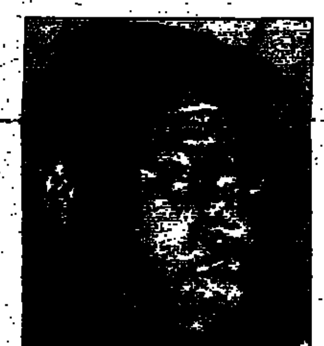
Saturday March 13 • Madison Sq. Garden, New York

Even though Holyfield dropped Mercer, he rates the bout with Lewis as his toughest. "Lewis is not just big, he's strong. He was really up for the fight with me and if he is seriously up for this one, it's going to be a tough fight for Evander.

"Lewis is a tremendous fighter when he is serious. If he hasn't looked too good in some fights, don't be fooled. You've got to look at the opponents. It takes the opponent to psyche you up and make you train. If you know somebody is capable of kicking your butt, you will train harder."

According to Mercer, Lewis's weight — 240lb — and power can drain Holyfield of his energy, but the American warned that being big has its disadvantages. "It works both ways," he said. "His body would be exposed and you know how well Evander works with the body.

"But when Lewis leans on you, you have to work harder and that fatigues you because you have to wrestle 240lb and you have to deal with this guy's power and bulk. When he leans on you or holds you or hits you, you realise how strong he is. The only one who is stronger is Tommy Morrison. He hits like Mike Tyson."



Mercer: experience

Mercer added that Lewis's boxing should not be ignored and those who believe that he cannot fight inside are in for a surprise. "Steward had done a good job [on Lewis] when he fought me. He was throwing some real punches, more punches and taking the fight to me. He was really good inside. He has learnt some new punches inside, uppercuts and all, from Steward."

Surprisingly, Mercer thinks that Lewis has a good chin. There have been doubts about Lewis's punch resistance after his bouts with Oliver McCall and Shannon Briggs, but Mercer said that, while a punch from any heavyweight could suddenly change the course of a contest, he had not noticed any particular vulnerability to a punch. "I was hitting him with right hands and jabs at will and it didn't seem to matter. He kept coming back."

However, Mercer warned that Holyfield was a master counter-puncher and if Lewis made the slightest error, he would pay for it. "Evander is a real warrior. He throws great combinations.

"People say he is getting old, but we all said that before he fought Mike Tyson. Holyfield came out there smoking. He surprised everyone. I know he has been in wars, but he's still looking good. He can't afford to black out in this fight. It's going to take everything he's got to beat Lewis, believe me."

Since Holyfield is a counter-puncher, Mercer gives one piece of advice to Lewis — to use the feint to bring out Holyfield's counter before throwing the right hand behind the jab. "If he does that, Lewis should win," Mercer said. "I would like to see him win because I whipped him. I hope he will be man enough when he's champion to give me another shot."

LINKS
WEBSITE: http://www.tvko.com
TELEVISION: Sky Box Office 3, (Saturday, 10pm)

Nobody gives an inch in battle of the bulge





Having spent the past few days wondering feverishly how any person on earth could have a "reach" of 84 inches, I have at last discovered what it means. It was a relief, I must say, because there the statistic had been in black and white: Evander Holyfield, reach (in inches) 77½; Lennox Lewis 84.

The maths were inescapable. Eighty-four divided by 12 meant that Lewis had arms *seven feet long* — marvellous for holding off small opponents, of course, or for turning off the light when you're already in bed, but on the other hand quite disastrous for his aunties wanting to buy off-the-peg knitwear for him in Marks and Sparks.

But when he finally came before us at Madison Square Garden on Tuesday afternoon, Lewis did not noticeably trail his knuckles along the floor, so I guessed there must be some other explanation. A "reach" is in fact a span — from fingertip to fingertip with arms outstretched — and this is something that you just have to know.

You likewise have to know that "the tale of the tape" has nothing to do with the adventures of an intestinal parasite, as I at first supposed. This is a game of vital statistics — literally vital. They measure wrists, waists, necks, biceps, thighs. In fact, with just one very obvious exception in the region of the inside leg, it's a case of "if you've got one, measure it".

Last night I dreamt they took out Lewis's liver and weighed it on some butcher's scales, just to prove his very *offal* was bigger than the other guy's. And it was, actually. You will be very pleased to hear that Lewis's liver was so enormous that at this macabre weigh-in it merited a round of applause.

So the two awesome specimens were separately on show, very like prize cattle, and it was a fairly uncomfortable experience gaping at their silky physiques while they proudly pretended it wasn't going on. I have to say I couldn't take my eyes off either of them, though it wasn't what you're thinking, since I had an unprecedented urge on each occasion not only to touch their skin and push the flesh, but also to imagine it with gravy. Good grief, these men are live meat for sale!

We even know how good a breeder Holyfield is, if the analogy requires further substantiation. With his open admission to nine children from six partners, virtually his most famous trait is his virility (though closely followed by his puzzling approach to contraception).

"It's quite physical, this, then?" I found myself saying to people who were never in any doubt that boxing's physicality was its main virtue. Down at the airless and subterranean Church Street Gym, I tried punching a bag to wile away the three hours waiting for a glimpse of Holyfield. I gave it all I've got and the bag (obligingly) moved slightly. Ho hum.

Evidently, when Mike Tyson uses a punchbag, it's a bag filled with water so that it better emulates the effect of punching the human body. Isn't that good news? "Does he cover it in human skin as well?" I blurted. Oh dear. It was a thought that should have been censored by the unconscious before meeting the light of day. However, once imagined, Tyson's human-skin punchbag can never be unimagined again.



> 'It was live meat for sale as two awesome specimens were put on show like prize cattle'

However, admiring these blokes for their big shiny physiques is a large reason for being here. Flicking through a boxing magazine at the weekend, I noticed a rather nasty mail-order souvenir on offer: neck-up busts of Holyfield and Lewis finished in bronze and fashioned by a sculptor so inept at dreadlocks that Lewis appears to be wearing a pleated tea cosy on his head. But to concentrate on their faces just misses the point. Look at Holyfield and you see the coat hanger triangle of his neck muscles, the wasp waist, the dangerously friable skull. Lewis has beach ball shoulders, arms the size of young trees and a skin so velvety that you can imagine it all has to be brushed each morning in the same direction.

These are the bodies that will dispense and sustain punishment when it comes to the fight on Saturday. And I find I would much rather think about Holyfield's famous "heart" (or even his spleen and kidneys) than dwell on that arguably more important organ, his brain, because Holyfield has taken care to protect his heart with muscle and fat, whereas his brain remains a soft, helpless blancmange floating inside a skull that offers all the cushioned protection of a biscuit tin.

Greater minds than mine have noticed this tiny problem in the sport of boxing and have mostly reached the convenient conclusion that if poor, uneducated people are willing to be punched on the head for money and glory, it's actually rather spiffing of them. "Catch me, though!" the apologists add as they shell out thousands of dollars for a ringside seat.

On a rare investigative note, I saw a chap from Lewis's camp extract blood from his ear lobe and, curious to know why, I tried to ask him. I found him performing what might have been a blood sugar test (a crimson dot on a white slide), but since the man refused to speak to me, I can't tell you what it was. It was so odd in the context, however. To jump into the ring and extract blood in full view of cameras and hacks, yet react as though any single physical aspect of Lennox Lewis — from his top to his toe, and seven feet across the span of his mighty arms — is a secret.

Hide disputes the 'undisputed' label

HERBIE HIDE has repeated his attack on the world championship bout between Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield at Madison Square Garden on Saturday, saying that to call it a unification was a "farce".

Holyfield is the World Boxing Association (WBA) and International Boxing Federation (IBF) world champion, while Lewis holds the World Boxing Council (WBC) version of the heavyweight title.

Hide, who defends his World Boxing Organisation (WBO) crown against Orlin Norris at the Albert Hall on April 3, said: "All those people who are looking at New York this week thinking they are seeing the undisputed championship of the world have got it wrong. I am the WBO champion, so the winner has to fight me somewhere along the line. To be honest, to call it a unification is a complete farce.

"When Lennox Lewis first retrieved his belt from the dustbin, he was desperate to unify with Tommy Morrison, then WBO champion, and then later on with Riddick Bowe, for both titles. So why is it now he chooses to ignore the belt he once craved for?

"I can't wait to blow Norris away and then beat Vitali Klitschko, the mandatory challenger, because I can then show the world who's the best," he added.

Hide, from Norwich, had been scheduled to meet Norris in Newcastle last month, but doctors advised him to withdraw because of a skin condition.

Lewis was declared the Fighter of the Year by the WBC yesterday. José Sulaiman, the president of the WBC, said that the award was in recognition of his services to boxing and two defences of his title, against Shannon Briggs and Zelkjo Mavrovic. Holyfield did not qualify for the award.

Ali strikes a blow for the great and the good

Rob Hughes on a ring master who transcends sporting generations

It has been staring us in the face throughout this already remarkable sporting week in New York. Joe DiMaggio, the father of baseball, has been taken away for burial in his home town of San Francisco this morning and this country, with its special relationship between winners and the American Dream, is one icon shorter than at the start of March.

No matter who wins, or how the contest is won between Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis on Saturday, there is not a hope that either man will join the pantheon of what American society craves. One who has passed through Madison Square Garden just before the boxing circus arrived. The very word that has run through the pre-contest mumbo jumbo — respect — fits that man, Muhammad Ali, like a snug coat. As he leaves the building, already with a pressing engagement, he stops instinctively. A group of small children are passing by and the face of Ali lights up.

There is that rapport that we sometimes see between old people and infants and though Ali is but 57, he has in some ways been made old by Parkinson's Syndrome. Forget, for a moment, the argument as to whether his trade has anything to do with the state of his mind: what was in his eye as he saw these children was almost a blessed look of contentment, of humour. He reached down and "shadow-boxed" with a delighted young boy and then he picked up a girl of maybe 3 years old and gently kissed her on the cheek. She, too, looked thrilled, but a moment later frightened. His hands began to tremble, just as they had done when, at the opening of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, he lit the flame. There was dignity now, as then, in Ali, dignity fused with concern from this onlooker, at any rate.

Such a great sportsman, he is the American ideal in that he first became a winner, then a winner with presence and honour and then a retired winner who maintained his standards, even in illness, so that Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, has recently honoured him with the title of unofficial peace ambassador to the world. "People like Muhammad transcend national boundaries," Annan announced.

The Greatest was at the Garden for commercial reasons. Wheaties, "the Breakfast of Champions", needed the most special athlete it could find to launch its 75th anniversary and making the cover of the Wheaties box has, since the 1930s, always been the Mecca of recognition from the world of commerce to the champions of sport.

DiMaggio made that box ten times, although at the back. One other pugilist, Max Baer, had endorsement contracts without featuring on the coveted packet and, in the modern world, Tiger Woods is a Wheaties spokesman. Michael Jordan, the retiring basketball icon, retains the link.



> 'He plays a role for a lot of athletes in how to act once they have left the arena'

But why Ali and why now? The fact is that the United States is going through a hard time retaining the innocence, the awe of its sporting personalities. Too many of them turn out to have feet of clay, either because they disgrace their fame or because they achieve with the transience of butterflies, winning, say, the Olympics, hovering with their hand *out* and disappearing as instant millionaires.

In the streets around Broadway, the pace of life so frantic, the energy invigorating and yet the vacuum of a sporting great diminished, it is curious to find Ali where he was never invited in his prime.

Wheaties was understandably shy of the three-times world heavyweight champion, who refused the draft to serve in Vietnam and who changed to Islam. Now, 30 years on, virtually unable to speak more than a few mumbled words, the cereal company has decided that the time is right.

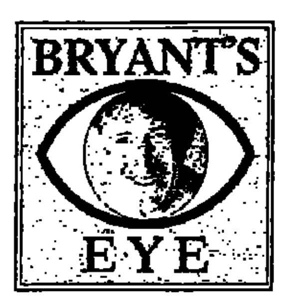
"He was with us for two hours for this launch," Greg Zimprich, a company spokesman, enthused. "You cannot imagine the charisma that he still has."

Watching all of this, caring for her man and wary of the surrounding media, Ali's wife, Lonnie, hears him say: "I'm not fast, but I'm still pretty." She smiles, she has heard it all so many times.

And it is she who recognises the enduring acclaim. "I think Muhammad probably plays a role for a lot of athletes, in how to act once they have left the ring, the court, the baseball arena or whatever . . . and the proudest moment? I think it was at the Olympics, it was such a wonderful and unique thing for him to be a symbol representing the world."

So, as one American "great" is laid to rest, as others appreciate they will never get the call, Muhammad Ali, survivor extraordinary, is honoured and enriched. And he didn't leave Madison Square Garden without giving back.

Athletes passing breath test



For the sportsman who has tried everything in the pursuit of physical fitness, it may be time for a bit of heavy breathing. These days, there is no limit to the lengths that people will go to get the edge in sport. When a new way to fine-tune the body comes along — especially if it is legal — competitors will jump on it.

The latest frontier in the battle for the super-fit body is lung power and the latest weapon is a device called "Powerbreathe", which is said to act like a dumb-bell for the lungs.

Already, the 28 players in the England rugby union squad have been issued with the Powerbreathe and have incorporated it into their fitness regime for the Five Nations Championship and World Cup. Dave Reddin, the England fitness adviser, said: "It's a hand-held unit with a mouthpiece and requires only two minutes' work every day to help improve endurance. I was a little sceptical at first, but we have been pleased with the results."

Several top athletes are working out with it, including Allison Curbishley and Paula Radcliffe. Cyclists and triathletes are queueing up to get their lips around it and it is being used by the Cambridge Boat Race crew in their quest to blow Oxford out of the water on April 3.



Curbishley, one of several leading athletes seeking to improve her performances on the track, tries out the Powerbreathe equipment at Birmingham University

Since man first hurled a rock or chased a deer, there has been a realisation that physical prowess is linked to the breath. Ancient systems of physical culture, including yoga, laid great store on the power of the lungs and breath control. Leading physical trainers in the first half of this century bellowed out the benefits of deep breathing and it was believed that you could prepare for various sports by doing little else.

The emphasis on lung power was scoffed at in the post-war period, when acknowledged experts decided that the path to sporting perfection lay in massive volumes of physical work, weight training and, ultimately, performance-enhancing drugs.

Now and then, a sportsman would remind us of the forgotten power in the lungs. Emil Zatopek, the greatest of all Olympic distance runners, was a ceaseless experimenter on his own body. As a young soldier, he would see how long he could hold his breath, believing that this could increase his lung capacity. Once, doing this on sentry duty, he keeled over, unconscious.

Herb Elliot, from Australia, who was never defeated over the mile, used breathing techniques taught by Percy Cerutty, his eccentric coach. These included an alarming procedure known as tidal breathing.

Cerutty's theories were the result of his own experience. "Because of my defective lungs when I contracted double pneumonia," he said, "I just had to learn to breathe deeper and completely fill my lungs. I found that running in the orthodox fashion limited my stride and prevented me from fully filling my lungs." More recently, we have seen footballers, runners and sportsmen all over the place displaying ridiculous nose-strips, reinforced plasters that are supposed to dilate the nostrils so that the competitor can take in more air through the nose.

The Powerbreathe dumb-bell for the lungs has considerably more scientific backing and credibility. It has been developed by Dr Alison McConnell, a physiology lecturer and founding director of the Human Performance and Sports Medicine Unit at Birmingham University. A former international rower, McConnell and her team carried out intensive trials on elite athletes using the device and claim that it can improve performance by almost 30 per cent.

"We previously believed that the breathing muscles were not a limiting factor in exercise," McConnell said, "but the fact that training the inspiratory muscles is possible could have important implications for sport."

Initially, the research explored ways of alleviating breathlessness in older people and it was so successful that the experiment was extended to a group of healthy young people using cycle ergometers. "After four weeks, we found that the time the subjects could sustain on the ergometers before they became exhausted increased by about 20 per cent, which is a fairly impressive improvement," McConnell said.

'Cyclists are queueing up to get their lips round it'

The Powerbreathe is a small plastic device that looks like a cross between a snorkel and a Ventolin inhaler. You breathe through the mouthpiece with your nose firmly sealed off with a nose-clip.

The training advice suggests that you use it for a few minutes twice a day. You breathe in against a controlled and adjustable resistance and the theory is that the muscles controlling the taking in of breath will be overloaded and grow stronger. It is now being marketed through sporting magazines and sells for just under £50.

As word of it gets around, McConnell believes that we may not be far away from the time when there will be a Powerbreathe in every sportsman's kitbag. When you consider some of the sinister performance-enhancing aids that all too often lurk in such bags these days, the inclusion of a simple drug-free dumb-bell for the lungs would surely be a welcome breath of fresh air.

JOHN BRYANT

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Challenge Cup: Third-round replay: Colwyn Bay v Droylsden.

RYMAN LEAGUE: Second division: Windsor and Eton v Bedford. **Puma Cup: Third round:** Berkhamsted v Chesham.

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Stoke v Leicester (at Newcastle Town, 7 0)

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Newry v Glentoran.

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Islington St Mary's v Brache Sparta, London Colney v Waltham Abbey; New Bradwell St Peter v Beaconsfield Sycob **Challenge Trophy: Fourth round:** Arlesey v Holmer Green, Barkingside v Potters Bar.

INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND INVITATION CUP: Fourth round: Bandon v Halesowen H.

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Greater London Leopards v Manchester Giants (7 0)

HOCKEY: Men's representative match (in Portsmouth, 11.0): Army v Civil Service

ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda play-off championship: Group B: Ayr Scottish Eagles v Newcastle Riverkings (7.30).

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 47

WOBBEGONG

(b) A brown carpet shark with buff markings, *Orectolobus maculatus*, found off the coast of Australia. The Aboriginal name. "Wobbegongs add to their camouflage by growing fronds that look like seaweed on their faces."

SEMANG

(c) (A member of) a Negrito people inhabiting the interior of the Malay peninsula. Also *Samang*. The Malay word. "For practical purposes a Semang is a nomadic primitive Peninsular negrito whose numeral system stops at two."

SUNYATA

(c) The concept of the essential emptiness of all things and of ultimate reality as a void beyond worldly phenomena. The Sanskrit word for emptiness, non-existence. *Sunya* means empty, void. "Sunyata is what is left behind after an endless series of negations, and is therefore the most positive and fundamental of ideas."

TSANTSA

(a) A human head shrunk as a trophy by the Jivaros of Ecuador. The Jivaro word. "The finished tsantsa is about the size of the head of a small monkey, and preserves strikingly the human expression."

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

Solution: 1 Rxf7+! Bxf7 (1 ... Kxf7 2 Nxd6+ wins the black queen and White retains a huge attack) 2 Qxd6+ Ke8 3 Nf6 checkmate.



TELEVISION CHOICE

A proud industry ravaged

Fred Dibnah's Industrial Age
BBC2, 8pm (England) 7.30pm (Wales)

The statistics are mind-boggling: In 1947 there were three quarters of a million miners in this country. In 1984, just before the miners' strike, there were 200,000. Today, in Fred-speak, "the industry is practically, nearly all gone". The fierce, close communities which grew up round the pits, with their wonderful galas and horrific tragedies (in Wales a miner was killed every six hours) are gone, too. The dismantled pits — and some that have been lovingly restored — stand forlorn and majestic in ravaged landscapes. The dauntless Dibnah descends one shaft to see ghostly models of the workers (including children) some 1,500ft below ground and admires a bank of eight huge Lancashire boilers which drove the steam hoists. "It's rather sad and eerie in 'ere now. And somebody's nicked the water gauges . . ."

Horizon: New Star in Orbit
BBC2, 9.30pm

For years now Americans have been pouring vast fortunes into the ISS (International Space Station). Last year they actually got the first bits of it into orbit. When it's finished it will be big enough to be seen from Earth — but will it really have been worth the phenomenal risks and costs involved? It will take several hundred hours of space walks and almost 100 flights over five years finally to assemble this monster. It's already weathered 15 years of planning and 34 redesigns just to get the first components off the drawing board. And yet, as Nasa admits in this programme, much of its life-support equipment is still untested. Filmed in America and Russia, this film charts ISS's extraordinary history.

Dispatches
Channel 4, 9.30pm

The subtitle of this report could almost be "Dr Arpad Pusztai, Hero or Villain?" The scientist, until now constrained by a gagging clause, first raised the alarm about genetically modified foods last year — and was promptly sacked from his research institute. He had pioneered the use of a certain gene in food which further research suggested could be harmful to human health. When he fed rats with a genetically modified potato, their immune systems rapidly deteriorated and their brains shrank. If one GM potato could cause such problems, what about other GM foods on the market?

Ralph Ineson as the hopelessly romantic Luke in *Playing the Field* (BBC1, 9.35pm)

Playing the Field
BBC1, 9.35pm

One of the most taut and credible slices of domestic drama this year surfaces in tonight's edition of Kay Mellor's fine series about a female football team. Melanie Hill, in an award-worthy performance as Rita, makes the grave mistake of telling her husband John (James Nesbitt) that, in a drunken moment, she had made love to her ex (John McArdle). Women especially will sympathise with her angst and her very grown-up (but sadly misplaced) desire to be honest with the man she and their small son love. Sounds soapy on paper, perhaps, but this scene is a genuine heart-stopper. There are also fun-and-games sub-plots when Jo is found *in flagrante* with Ryan. Elizabeth Cowley

RADIO CHOICE

The Longest Radio Show in the World — Ever!
Radio 1, 9am

Whatever time you are reading this you have no excuse to miss Mayo's marathon: it is scheduled to last 36 hours and, assuming that the Radio 1 presenter still has his head between his earphones at 9pm tomorrow, he will go into the *Guiness Book of Records* for the "longest individual broadcast". Well, all right: it may not be something to make the grandchildren wide-eyed, but it is all in a good cause (the main Comic Relief activity is tomorrow) and the Mayo marathon proves that this annual charitable exercise never seems to run out of ways to make money. Mayo will not be talking throughout: Jo Whiley, Radcliffe and Lard, Andy Kershaw and John Peel are helping out. And Mayo did have a medical beforehand.

Crossing Continents
Radio 4, 11am

I sense that "name three famous Belgians" has faded from the top ten of dinner party games but it retains its merits, and apparently there are people who can still raise an argument over whether fictional characters such as Hercule Poirot qualify: aren't people funny? Belgium's profile is about to be raised by staging the European football championships next year but *Crossing Continents* today is about dealings on the Belgian football landscape. Hundreds of young African players have been brought to the country's top clubs with promises of fame, but most do not make the grade, with the result that they are tossed out by the clubs without even the funds to get home, leaving them adrift and often homeless. Peter Barnard

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** The Longest Radio Show in the World — Ever! See Choice **12.00pm** Jo Whiley **2.00** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Dave Pearce **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Dave Pearce **8.00** Mary Anne Hobbs **10.00** John Peel **12.00** Andy Kershaw **2.00am** Clive Warren **4.00** Longest Radio Show In the World — Ever!

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00** Jimmy Young **2.00pm** Ed Stewart **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** David Allan **8.00** Paul Jones. Blues requests **9.00** Punt and Dennis: It's Been a Bad Week (5/6) **9.30** At the Beeb: June Whitfield (1/4) **10.00** The Alan Price Set (1/6) **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.00** Lynn Parsons **3.00am** Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00** The Midday News **1.00pm** Ruscoe and Co **4.00** Drive **7.00** News Extra **7.30** On the Line. How Manchester is preparing to play host for the Commonwealth Games in three years' time **8.00** Inside Edge **9.00** Hoops. Preview of Saturday's big final at the NEC in Birmingham **9.30** Sportshop **10.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast **9.00** Scott Chisholm & Sally James **12.00** Justice With Jacobs **1.00pm** Anna Raeburn **4.00** The Sports Zone **7.00** One to One with Andy Gray **8.00** Jackie Mason **10.30** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Russ Williams **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **6.45** Pete and Geoff **10.00** Mark Forrest **1.00am** James Merritt **4.30** Richard Allen

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** From Our Own Correspondent **8.20** Off the Shelf: Letters From My Windmill **8.35** The Works **9.00** World News **9.05** Network **9.20** Andy Kershaw's World of Music **9.50** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Britain Today **10.45** Performance **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Assignment **12.00pm** World News **12.05** Outlook **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** World News **2.05** The Works **2.30** Meridian Books **3.00** World News **3.05** Sports Round-Up **3.15** Westway **3.30** The Greenfield Collection **4.00** World News **4.15** Insight **4.30** The Music Studio **4.45** The Lab **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** World News **6.15** Britain Today **6.30** Assignment **7.00** World News **7.05** The Works **7.30** From Our Own Correspondent **7.45** Off the Shelf: Letters From My Windmill **8.00** Newshour **9.00** World News **9.05** World Business Report **9.20** Britain Today **9.30** Meridian Books **10.00** World News **10.15** Sports Round-Up **10.30** The Music Studio **10.45** The Lab **11.00** World News **11.05** Outlook **11.45** Insight **12.00am** The World Today **12.30** The Works **12.55** My Century **1.00** The World Today **1.30** Westway **1.45** Performance **2.00** The World Tod ay **2.30** Focus on Faith **3.00** The World Today **3.20** Sports Round-Up **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. A selection of rousing music to start the day **8.00** Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour and CD of the Week **12.00pm** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones presents favourite music **2.00** Concerto. Nyman (The Piano Concerto) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance **6.30** Newsnight. The latest headlines and sport updates **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Mendelssohn (String Symphony No 7 in D minor); Schubert (Symphony No 9 in C); Michael Haydn (Horn Concerto in D) **11.00** Mann at Night. A chance to wind down with the sound of ambient music **2.00am** Concerto. Nyman (The Piano Concerto) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

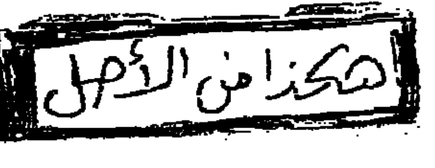
RADIO 3

6.00am On Air Petroc Trelawny reviews a new triple bill from the choreographer Richard Alston
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Includes Brahms (Scherzo in C minor, WoO 2, FAE Sonata); Stravinsky (Apollo); Rachmaninov (Variations on a Theme of Corelli, Op 42); Chausson (Symphony in B flat)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Kyung-Wha Chung
11.00 Sound Stories: Indian Summers A look at the later years of Richard Strauss
12.00 Composer of the Week: Delius
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Petersen Quartet. Includes Mendelssohn (String Quartet in E minor, Op 44 No 2); Shostakovich (String Quartet No 4, Op 83)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras Ulster Orchestra under Vernon Handley and Jacek Kaspszyk, Ernst Kovacic, violin. Howard Hanson (Symphony No 2, Romantic); Barber (Violin Concerto); Suk (A Fairy-Tale Suite); Borodin (Symphony No 2 in B minor)
4.00 Ensemble Penny Gore introduces a recital by Tasmin Little, violin, and Piers Lane, piano (r)
4.45 Music Machine Verity Sharp visits the St Albans Organ Museum (r)
5.00 In Tune With Sean Rafferty. Music includes Mozart (Concerto in C for flute and harp, K299), performed by the Academy of Ancient Music, director Christopher Hogwood
7.30 Performance on 3 Vienna Philharmonic under Simon Rattle. Haydn (Symphony No 70 in D); Strauss (Metamorphosen); Berlioz (Symphonie Fantastique) (r)
9.25 Postscript: Radio Poems — The Other Shadow by Ken Smith (4/5)
9.45 Brahms A selection of the Waltzes, Op 39, performed by Yaara Tal and Andreas Groethuysen, piano duet
10.00 Music Restored Lucie Skeaping introduces a Spanish edition featuring songs and guitar music by Fernando Sor and Dionisio Aguardo
10.45 Night Waves The Israeli novelist A.B. Yehoshua talks to Paul Allen about *A Journey to the End of the Millenium*
11.30 Jazz Notes Alyn Shipton presents a profile of Loren Schoenberg
12.00 Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (r)
1.00am Through the Night 1.00 Rudolf Buchbinder, piano, Luxembourg PO under Justin Brown. Music by Schubert, Beethoven and Brahms **2.30** Grieg (Three Lyric Pieces) **2.40** Sibelius (Three Songs for American Schools) **3.00** Schools: Music Workshop **3.20** Let's Move! **3.40** Words Alive! **3.55** First Steps in Drama **4.10** Listen and Write **4.35** Radio Showcase **4.40** Check It Out **5.00** Corelli (Trio Sonata in C, Op 1 No 7) **5.05** Bruckner (Vexilla regis; Os justi; Virga Jesse floruit) **5.15** Bach (Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV543) **5.30** Glinka (Kamarinskaya) **5.40** Rimsky-Korsakov (Capriccio Espagnol)

RADIO 4

5.35am Shipping Forecast 5.40 Inshore Forecast
5.45 Prayer for the Day 5.47 Farming Today Rachel Morgan presents rural news
6.00 Today with James Naughtie and Sue MacGregor
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament Update on political developments
9.00 Melvyn Bragg: In Our Time Guests join Melvyn Bragg to consider ideas and events which have influenced the present age
9.30 Q & A Jez Nelson considers the implications of discovering extraterrestrial life
9.45 (FM) Serial: The Pleasures of the Table Part four. Extracts from the work of Jane Grigson
9.45 (LW) Daily Service
10.00 Woman's Hour Jenni Murray presents
11.00 Crossing Continents See Choice
11.30 Fat Chance The slimmers' club rallies round to make sure Kelly's wedding day is one she will never forget. Last in series (5/5)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News 12.04pm You and Yours Consumer news and investigations
1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Open Country Richard Uridge presents
2.00 The Archers Yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: Assassins — Sic Semper Tyrannis David Pownall recreates the scene of Abraham Lincoln's assassination at the hands of John Wilkes Booth. With Nathan Osgood
3.00 Call You and Yours: 0870 010 0444 Consumer justice programme, presented by Peter White
3.28 Radio 4 Appeal Norman Bowler speaks on behalf of ROKPA, a charity dedicated to providing an education for Tibet's poorest children (r)
3.30 Shorelines Portrait of the island of Foulness, used by the Army to test its weaponry (r)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Anna Massey narrates part 49 of the history of Britain (r)
4.00 Nice Work Alison Mitchell investigates the changing world of work
4.30 The Material World Trevor Phillips tests the adage that beauty is in the eye of the beholder
5.00 PM with Chris Lowe and Nigel Wrench
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Yes, Minister Classic political sitcom (r)
7.00 The Archers Tim has a furtive look around Honeysuckle Cottage
7.15 Front Row Francine Stock presents the nightly arts magazine
7.45 The Cry of the Bittern Tim Jackson's environmental drama. Broadcast earlier as part of *Woman's Hour* (19/30) (r)
8.00 What If? New series. Professor Christopher Andrew and guests consider how history would have been affected if a significant episode from the past had turned out differently — beginning with the Great Fire of London (1/4)
8.30 The Week in Westminster Peter Riddell of *The Times* takes a look behind the political scenes
9.00 Testbeds Vanessa Collingridge takes a trip south of San Francisco to explore Silicon Valley
9.30 Melvyn Bragg: In Our Time Broadcast earlier (r)
10.00 The World Tonight Presented by Robin Lustig
10.40 Budget Statement By the Liberal Democrats
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Ernest Hemingway Centenary — The Sun Also Rises Part nine
11.00 Late Night on 4: The Way It Is Satire and comedy sketches
11.30 (FM) A Good Read The poet Kit Wright and the literary specialist Wendy Cooling choose children's paperbacks (r)
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament Update from Westminster
12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: Golf Dreams Part three. John Updike recalls his passion for golf
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Perry Cleveland-Peck, Ian Hughes, Gillian Maxey, Jane Gregory and Barry O'Keefe



Stuck between a rock and a "coffee" shop

Even a quarter of a century after metrication in Britain, nobody really gets the hang of grams and kilos until they start getting involved in drugs in a big way. It's an early warning system for schoolteachers: when the boy who used to be the most mathematically confused pupil in the class can suddenly divide grams into complex fractions in his head, you know that he's doing a lot more than homework in his spare time.

Of course, nobody did too much about all this until drug-taking spread beyond poor districts of America and Europe to become a middle class pastime. As Richard Pryor pointed out, people only started calling drug-taking an epidemic when "white folks started doing it". Then it got so bad that Europe's leaders got together to find a solution to the problem.

The solution they hit upon was Amsterdam. They reckoned that by making one city a haven for recreational drug use, the problem could be geographically contained. In return for shouldering this burden, the Dutch Government probably receives secret payments, the same way other nations earn money reprocessing more timid countries' nuclear fuel.

And whenever Amsterdam's junkie population looks like swelling, other nations party to the secret agreement are presumably obliged to broadcast propaganda documentaries showing just how grim being a smackhead can be.

How else can we explain *Amsterdamage*, last night's film for BBC2's *Modern Times*? It looked like a stylish, government-sponsored film designed to portray the dismal consequences of decriminalising drugs.

Whatever the British Government is paying Amsterdam to lure these expatriate Brits away from England, it is not enough. Patsi, in particular, was scarily unaware of just how unentertaining she is: after seeing this film a prisoner, given a choice between a year's solitary confinement and a week sharing a cell with Patsi, would unhesitatingly choose the former.

In her more cogent moments Patsi — who arrived in Amsterdam a couple of decades ago — bores everyone with her hymns to this "honeypot" city: you can grow dope in your windowbox, cocaine's cheap, booze is available around the clock, and, as one unemployed Brit explained, social security runs to at least £500 a month, further enhanced by rent subsidies and gifts.

But in her pharmacologically enhanced moments Patsi enters a still more fevered state of delirium in which she believes herself to be a novelist and nags publishers to read her work. Actually, Patsi does have a way with words. But it's not a way that would interest a pub-

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

lisher unless he was looking for a title that would generate a large tax loss. Delusions of literary competence are a common by-product of drug or alcohol abuse, but few cocaine addicts have their efforts exposed to such a large television audience for ridicule. They're all at it: Patsi's friend Dawn, who fled to Amsterdam 18 years ago to escape a philandering husband has taken refuge in verse.

Dawn spent four years in jail after being caught smuggling drugs (which she doesn't feel too bad about, because — get this — "I never smuggled anything that I didn't use myself", which must be why burglars get so narked when they're done for stealing TVs, something they watch every day).

But did she get sloppy, or did she deliberately try to get caught, having decided that a prison sentence would be the easiest way to escape Patsi's company for a long stretch of time? Dawn thinks of herself as a lotus-eater. But now Dawn's son, Kris, has also become trapped by what Dawn calls the "spider's web" that is Amsterdam. He'd like to crawl out of the web, but he's now stuck, too: "You've had a belly full of beer, and a nose full of coke. You dream about what you want to do, rather than actually physically doing it."

Gilt baubles from Cabouchon seem to be the cocaine of Britain's middle-class. According to **Trouble at The Top** (BBC2), when the company went bust last year, it had an annual turnover of £140 million and 250,000 distributors (which is what they call dealers in the costume-jewellery world).

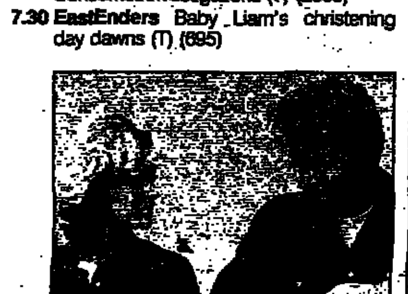
Within days of this debacle, Petra Doring, the formidable German woman who started the company, had started another direct-selling costume-jewellery company, called, um, Cabouchon Europe. She is determined to rebuild her empire; and given the testimonies of former colleagues who called her ruthless, brutal and calculatingly disloyal, it sounded ominous when she told us those gentle days were over. This time the gloves were off: "It's not the nice girl any more!" It's not that Petra is a grump: "I have to smile, otherwise I don't get what I want." But even when she smiles, her eyes still scrape you like a razor. Lord knows what Petra's like when she gets really mad. One way to find out would be to expose her to Kate Reardon's "Tartometer".

Reardon used this instrument on **Looking Good** (BBC2) to convey to a not-spaghetti-thin 40-year-old who wore tight black mini-skirts, ankle boots, and applied her make-up with a palette knife, that walking in public wearing every piece of chunky gold jewellery she owned gave her a very high tart rating.

But hang on: all the Cabouchon saleswomen we saw also walked around dangling more shiny baubles than a Christmas tree, presumably hoping to be stopped by admiring passers-by keen to place an order. This is presumably what is known, in jewellery world jargon, as looking "completely stoned". It's pretty much like the Amsterdam version, only there's obviously a lot more gilt involved.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (50904)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (72053)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (2691459)
9.45 Wipeout (1098184)
10.10 The Vanessa Show (T) (7580898)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (3133985)
11.00 Change That (3143362)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (3113121)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (7008459)
12.00 Call My Bluff (67072)
12.30pm Top Tip Challenge (r) (4674817)
12.55 The Weather Show (T) (53718817)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (75140)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (59630492)
1.40 Neighbours (T) (35770850)
2.05 Ironside Police drama (r) (5991695)
2.55 Through the Keyhole (r) (T) (9918530)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6537492) **3.45** Pocket Dragon (5182343) **3.55** Anthony Ant (9812275) **4.10** The All New Popeye Show (6064169) **4.20** Home Farm Twins (6800091) **4.35** Short Change (3111695) **5.00** Newsround (4876121) **5.10** Grange Hill (9570508)
5.33 Rewind (T) (199362)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (585879)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (459)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (411)
7.00 Watchdog with Anne Robinson Consumer investigations (T) (2508)
7.30 EastEnders Baby Liam's christening day dawns (T) (695)



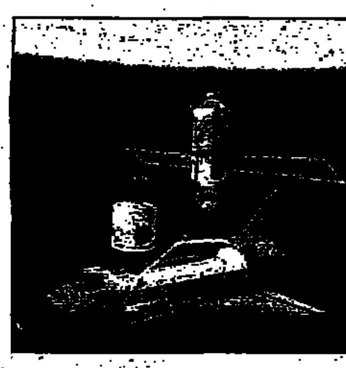
Matilda Ziegler as Jane and Nick Berry as Mike (8pm)

8.00 Harbour Lights Mike misses a dinner date with Melanie and she storms off leaving Jane to explain (T) (809169)
8.50 Points of View Viewers' opinions on recent programmes (T) (729492)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (5817)
9.30 Budget Response By Malcolm Bruce, Liberal Democrat Treasury Spokesman (T) (563324)
9.35 CHOICE **Playing the Field** Shazza asks for time to consider Luke's impulsive proposal (T) (286256)
10.25 They Think It's All Over Again With guests Chris Eubank and Arthur Smith (r) (T) (821850)
10.55 Question Time Topical debate from Manchester (T) (306879)
11.55 A Loss of Innocence (1996) Premiere. FILM A successful pianist returns to the Mormon community where he grew up, only to face suspicion and resentment. Directed by Graeme Clifford (935275)
1.25am Weather (1291473)
1.30 BBC News 24 (8849831)

6.55-7.00 Budget Broadcast (571237) **10.55 The Greasy Poll** (526695) **11.25 Question Time** (T) (100817) **12.25am FILM: A Loss of Innocence** (9911183) **1.55 News** (T) (1434305) **2.00-6.00 BBC News 24** (3847763)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Pingu **7.05** Teletubbies **7.30** Snorks **7.50** Blue Peter **8.20** *Taz-Mania* **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts **8.50** Fiddley Foodle Bird **9.00** Geography Programme Shorts **9.10** Job Bank **9.20** Job Bank **9.30** Watch **9.45** Come Outside **10.00** Teletubbies **10.30** Storytime **10.45** The Experimenter **11.05** Space Ark **11.15** Zig Zag **11.35** Pathways of Belief **11.50** Mad About Music **12.10pm** English File **12.30** Working Lunch **1.00** Fiddley Foodle Bird **1.10** War Walks **1.40** Hart-Davis on History
2.10 Awash with Colour From Baronscourt, Co Tyrone (56551492)
2.40 News; Weather (T) (3305782)
2.45 Westminster (T) (4782256)
3.25 News; Weather (T) (4832508)
3.30 The Village (r) (9572140)
3.55 Kaye (9597459)
4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (T) (6276904)
4.55 Esther (T) (5251985)
5.30 Today's the Day (T) (188)
6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Sci-fi adventure (r) (T) (264782)
6.45 Electric Circus A visit to the set of Sean Maguire's film *Out of Death* (T) (691430)
7.00 State of the Region Mike Embley scours the streets for a solution to a growing transport problem (T) (2459)
8.00 CHOICE **Fred Dibnah's Industrial Age** A tour of Britain's mining heritage (T) (9898)
8.30 Wheeler Dealers Adrian Chiles challenges two teams of budding entrepreneurs (T) (1633)
9.00 Red Dwarf Lister mistakenly joins the Canaries on the understanding that they are a prison choir (T) (3459)



An artist's impression of the deployment of part of the ISS (9.30pm)

9.30 CHOICE **Horizon** The launch of the first stages of the International Space Station (T) (285527)
10.20 Tales of Tools (4/6) (T) (367362)
10.30 Budget Response By the Liberal Democrats. With in-vision subtitles (T) (883633)
10.35 Newsnight (T) (219904)
11.20 Late Review Jackson Pollock at the Tate Gallery in London (454275)
11.55 Skiing Forecast (527985)
12.00 Despatch Box (11183)
12.30am BBC Learning Zone: Open University: News and the Democratic Agenda? **1.00** France **1.30** A New Way of Life **2.00** Further Education: Key Skills **4.00** Teaching Film and Media: But Is It Any Good? **4.30** Reading Movies **5.00** Teacher Training: Teaching Today Special **5.45** Open University: The World of the Dragon **6.10** Forest Futures

7.30pm Fred Dibnah's Industrial Age (T) (237) **8.00-8.30 A Welsh Herbal** (3/6) (9898) **10.20 Turning Points** (611695) **10.25-10.30 Budget Broadcast** (610966)

HTV WEST

5.30am ITV Morning News (63966)
6.00 GMTV (5855817)
9.25 Trisha (T) (8087546)
10.30 This Morning (T) (44692140)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (4180782)
12.30 ITV Lunchtime News (T) (4669985)
12.55 Shortland Street (9096695)
1.30 Home and Away Tragedy strikes for Brian (T) (35709362)
1.55 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (5280986)
2.40 Wheel of Fortune (T) (3518594)
3.10 ITV News Headlines (T) (4831879)
3.15 HTV News (T) (4823850)
3.20 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (4844343) **3.30** The Adventures of Dawdle (9804256) **3.40** The Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries (5178140) **3.50** Lavender Castle (9808072) **4.05** Hey Arnold! (6269614) **4.30** Children's Ward (362)
5.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (9940)
5.30 WEST: Pleasure Guide Magazine covering the region's entertainment (614)
5.30 WALES: Crazy Creatures New series. The wonders of wildlife (1/9) (614)
5.58 HTV Weather (170237)
6.00 HTV News (T) (527)
6.30 ITV Evening News; Weather (T) (879)
7.00 Emmerdale Donna sets out on a mission of mercy (T) (9184)
7.30 WEST: We Can Work It Out (661)
7.30 WALES: Wales This Week Current affairs issues (661)
8.00 Who Wants To Be a Millionaire? Ultimate big-prize game show (T) (8633)



Sylvester Stallone stars as a mysterious explosives expert (9pm)

9.00 The Specialist (1994) Premiere. FILM Sylvester Stallone stars as an explosives expert who becomes dangerously embroiled in Sharon Stone's efforts to exact a fitting revenge on the gang who cold-bloodedly murdered her parents. With James Woods, Rod Steiger and Eric Roberts. Directed by Luis Llosa (T) (8492)
11.00 ITV Nightly News; Weather (T) (212121)
11.20 Budget Response by the Liberal Democrat Treasury Spokesman (744430)
11.25 HTV News and Weather (T) (106121)
11.35 WEST: A Trip in the Cosmic Buggy New series. The pub and club scene in the region (735782)
11.35 WALES: We Can Work It Out Disgruntled Ford owners (735782)
12.05am WEST: Public Morals (r) (3782164)
12.05 WALES: Tales from the Darkside A man fails to recognise his son (3782164)
12.35 The Jerry Springer Show (r) (7614763)
1.20 Pop Down the Pub (r) (9481096)
1.50 Box Office America (7242034)
2.20 Cybernet Computer news (9216837)
2.50 Murder, She Wrote (r) (3506928)
3.40 Potty About Pets Buying pedigree cats. Last in series (68202416)
4.05 Coach (41666541)
4.30 Judge Judy (59484947)
4.50 ITV Nightscreen (1242676)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News; Weather (7328850)
12.55 Home and Away (4677904)
1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4249898)
2.10-2.40 Echo Point (56588546)
3.15-3.20 Central News (4823850)
5.30 Shortland Street (614)
6.00-6.30 Central News at Six; Weather (527)
11.25-11.35 Central News; Weather (106121)
11.35-12.40 Wonderful You (903701)
1.20am Highlander (4959305)
2.15 Pop Down the Pub (9305763)
2.40 T in the Park (8440367)
3.35 Cybernet (19805788)
4.05 Central Jobfinder '99 (8913560)
5.25-5.30 Asian Eye (7979947)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.27 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (4180782) **12.27-12.30 Small Talk, Big Talk** (7343169) **12.55-1.25 Westcountry Lunchtime Live** (T) (4677904) **1.25 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (4249898) **2.10-2.40 Home and Away** (T) (56588546) **3.15-3.20 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (4823850) **4.58-5.00 Birthday People** (7939701) **5.30 Dig It with Den** (1/18) (614) **6.00-6.30 Westcountry Live;** Weather (T) (527) **11.25-11.35 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (106121) **11.35-12.35 Wonderful You** (1/7) (r) (T) (432053)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** Weather (4180782) **5.30 Getaways** (10/10) (614) **6.00-6.30 Meridian Tonight** (T) (527) **11.25 Meridian News;** Weather (T) (106121) **11.35-12.35 Fitz** (T) (432053) **5.00am-5.30 Freescreen** (T) (53152)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (7347985) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (7328850) **5.30-6.00 About Anglia** (614) **6.00-6.30 Anglia News** (T) (527) **11.19-11.20 Anglia Air Watch** (754817) **11.25 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (106121) **11.35 Crime Night** (643362) **11.50-12.05 The Ticket** (r) (990782)

S4C

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (20221362) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (67913121) **9.00 Ysgolion:** History in Action (29273072) **9.20 Geographical Eye** (29260508) **9.40 Place and People** (42394879) **10.00 Middle English** (91613091) **10.20 Fourways Farm** (14133879) **10.30 Scientific Eye** (51665140) **10.50 What the Papers Said** (18592159) **11.00 The Number Crew** (40912411) **11.10 Pitch Fever** (79228430) **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (68365701) **12.00pm Bewitched** (T) (97151169) **12.30 Sesame Street** (T) (26979614) **1.00 Planed Plant** (T) (67923508) **1.30 FILM: The Night We Got the Bird** (T) (58996817) **3.00 Doors to Manual** (2/5) (T) (90237492) **3.30 Collectors' Lot** (T) (67249492) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (67268527) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (67257411) **5.00 Planed Plant** (90249237) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (67271091) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (93597324) **6.10 Heno** (T) (86087527) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (90252701) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (67258140) **8.00 Slaymaker** (T) (90238121) **8.30 Pam Fi Duw?** (T) (90257256) **9.00 i dot** (37409362) **10.00 Lee Evans — Kings of the Rings: A Century of British Boxing Bravery** (T) (54749140) **11.05 The 11 O'Clock Show** (88525614) **11.35 King of the Hill** (T) (92305879) **12.05am Dispatches** (T) (71408725) **12.35 Rising Damp** (T) (85429725) **1.05 4 Later;** Prey (35229305) **2.00 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.40am Rat-A-Tat-Tat (T) (3820430)
5.55 Sesame Street (4312614)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (98091)
9.00 Schools: History in Action (4457121) **9.20** Geographical Eye Over Asia (4477985) **9.40** Place and People (1697430) **10.00** Middle English (9888904) **10.20** Fourways Farm (5188546) **10.30** Scientific Eye (1691850) **10.50** What the Papers Said (8961121) **11.00** The Number Crew (9554492) **11.10** Pitch Fever (3304324)
11.30 Powerhouse (T) (9492)
12.00 Sesame Street (T) (50782)
12.30pm Bewitched (r) (T) (85966)
1.00 Pet Rescue (T) (68850)
1.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (90260850)
1.35 The Long, the Short and the Tall (1960) FILM Wartime drama about a Japanese scout captured by a British patrol in Burma. Laurence Harvey stars. Leslie Norman directs (T) (17877169)
3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (985)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (492)
4.30 Countdown (T) (3138362)
4.55 Ricki Lake A girl who thinks she's a vampire (T) (5246053)
5.30 Pet Rescue Presented by Wendy Turner and Mark Evans (T) (256)
6.00 Dishes Dating show with a culinary theme (T) (169)
6.30 Hollyoaks Mandy poses for Mr Cunningham (T) (121)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (915968)
7.50 The Outlaw Michael goes on the run from the Health Police (T) (625817)
8.00 Wild Tales A look at how different species display their aggression and the defence mechanisms they use to avoid conflict (T) (6275)
9.00 Ramsay's Boiling Point Tempers fray as Gordon learns that the president of Michelin is flying in from France for dinner (3/5) (T) (8527)
9.30 CHOICE **Dispatches** Exposé of the possible dangers of eating genetically modified foods (T) (98430)



Lee Evans presents a tribute to British heavyweight boxers (10pm)

10.00 Lee Evans — Kings of the Rings: A Century of British Boxing Bravery A light-hearted tribute to British heavyweight boxers (T) (5416614)
11.05 The 11 O'Clock Show Satirical news show with Iain Lee (343695)
11.40 Ally McBeal Fish sues for the right to speak openly (r) (T) (722188)
12.35am 4 Later Introduction; Prey (6268170)
1.30 Vids Offbeat video review (2055725)
2.05 Late Toon: Gas Planet (9712305)
2.10 NYPD Blue (r) (T) (7074270)
3.00 St Elsewhere (r) (8201725)
3.50 Nickelodeon (1976) FILM Nostalgic comedy about the unlikely people who became directors and actors during the early days of film-making. Directed by Peter Bogdanovich (45973229)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport Headline round-up (6155102)
7.00 WideWorld Part 15. Paul Coia reveals the practical uses of skills learned in schools (r) (T) (8029275)
7.30 Milkshake! (2544701)
7.35 Wimzie's House (r); 5 News Update (4523430)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (2746053)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (r); 5 News Update (2745324)
9.00 Holiday Park Caravan park manager Jane cracks down on a group of unruly holiday-makers (r) (T) (1212891)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (4305072)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (2582071)
10.20 Sunset Beach Ricardo realises that Maria loves Ben (T) (3592614)
11.10 Leeza (r) (3711463)
12.00 5 News at Noon (T) (2749140)
12.30pm Family Affairs Pete and Claire strike a deal (r) (T); 5 News Update (1127362)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful The Spectra show goes down a storm (T) (8028546)
1.30 The Roseanne Show Outrageous chat with the outspoken comedian (r); 5 News Update (1126633)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (9005362)
2.30 Good Afternoon (1603850)
3.30 Thrill (TVM 1996) FILM The owner of an amusement park chooses to ignore a terrorist's threat — with horrific results. Gripping drama, starring Antonio Sabato. Directed by Sam Pillsbury (5542607)
5.20 Sunset Beach Shown earlier (r) (T); 5 News Update (3676140)
6.00 100 Per Cent Computer-generated quiz (2349343)
6.30 Family Affairs Pete has a nasty shock (T) (2330695)
7.00 5 News; Weather Round-up of the day's stories (T) (9076850)
7.30 Natural Passions The ability of snake charmer Mouna Kawa to control an array of potentially lethal serpents (T), 5 News Update (2336879)
8.00 The Pepsi Chart Music and mayhem, with Doctor Fox (9092898)
8.30 Stranger Than Fiction Investigation into allegations of CIA involvement with mind-control drugs and brain implants designed to transform individuals into assassins; 5 News Update (9004633)
9.00 Shattered Trust (TVM 1993) FILM Successful lawyer Melissa Gilbert surprises herself and everyone else by inexplicably attacking a witness in court — until a visit to a psychiatrist unlocks repressed memories of childhood sexual abuse at the hands of her father. Determined to seek legal redress, she fights back. Drama, with Ellen Burstyn. Directed by Bill Corcoran (T); 5 News Update (49143985)
10.40 Bring Me the Head of Light Entertainment Comedy quiz (1609072)
11.15 Red Shoe Diaries A woman conducts an affair via fax (5929169)
11.50 The Jack Docherty Show With Parker Posey and Steven Soderbergh (8817817)
12.30am Live and Dangerous Dutch and Argentinian football (72105947)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (7030102)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (8711909)

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SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (32459) **7.30** Chris Evans Breakfast Show (33350) **8.30** Hollywood Squares (88576) **9.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (22633) **10.00** Oprah Winfrey (91350) **11.00** Guilty! (20614) **12.00** Jenny Jones (46091) **1.00pm** Mad About You (24430) **1.30** Jeopardy (33527) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (88140) **3.00** Jenny Jones (51459) **4.00** Guilty! (30966) **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (8617) **6.00** America's Dumbest Criminals (1351) **6.30** Dream Team (4091) **7.00** The Simpsons (1166) **7.30** The Simpsons (3575) **8.00** America's Dumbest Criminals (6966) **8.30** World's Weirdest TV (9701) **9.00** Friends (29850) **9.30** ER (97879) **10.30** Veronica's Closet (86121) **11.00** Dream Team (316-95) **11.30** Star Trek: Voyager (70492) **12.30am** The Commish (56980) **1.30** Long Play (6156657)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 51) **Firestorm (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60) **Fallen (1998)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59) **Flubber (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58) **Double Team (1997)**

SKY PREMIER

6.00am Miss Evers' Boys (TVM 1997) (57527) **8.00 Dear God (1996)** (37102) **10.00 The Boy from Mercury (1996)** (36614) **12.00** The Directors: Robert Zemeckis (39701) **1.00pm** Femmes Fatales (15121) **2.00 Miss Evers' Boys (TVM 1997)** (60695) **4.00 Dear God (1996)** (5091) **6.00 The Boy from Mercury (1996)** (60904) **7.30** Tracey [illegible]

[illegible] **stars (1968)** (16411) **9.00 Race Against the Harvest (1987)** (99256) **11.00 Possums (1997)** (57072) **1.00pm Cab To Canada (1998)** (93072) **3.00 Destroy All Monsters (1968)** (81508) **5.00 Possums (1997)** (15633) **7.00 Cab To Canada (1998)** (30091) **9.00 Wanted (1998)** (96633) **11.00 Perfect Weapon (1991)** (18140) **12.30 Cover Me (1995)** (898299) **2.05 Terror of Mechagodzilla (1975)** (5656638) **3.30 Playback (1995)** (373831)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm The Stars Look Down (1939) (7129343) **6.00 Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1953)** (2522492) **8.00 From Noon Till Three (1976)** (2534237) **10.00 Ordinary People (1980)** (12682430) **12.05am King David (1985)** (8457638) **2.00 The Magus (1968)** (9613675) **4.00 Anne of Windy Poplars (1940)** (9751805)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm L'Accompagnatrice (1992) (4154966) **8.00 Stand By Me (1986)** (87266188) **9.40 Cold Feet** (5607324) **10.00 Southern Comfort (1981)** (9937352) **11.50 The Driver (1978)** (5383508) **1.20am Un Flic (1972)** (4159693) **3.00 Journey to the Centre of the Earth (1959)** (5948812)

TNT

9.00pm Knights of the Round Table (1953) (53359411) **11.15 The Naked Spur (1953)** (99549063) **1.00am Once a Thief (1965)** (23803102) **3.00 Knights of the Round Table (1953)** (17239034)

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre **7.15** Wrestling **8.15** You're On Sky Sports! **9.00** Racing News **9.30** Aerobics **10.00** Ringside Special **11.30** Unbelievable Sports **12.00** Aerobics **12.30** European Tour Weekly **1.00** Live Golf **5.00** Wrestling **6.00** Sports Centre **6.30** [illegible]

SKY SPORTS 2

[illegible]

8.45 Sports Centre **5.00** Fish TV **9.30** Golf Extra **12.30pm** Australian Rally Championship **1.00** Rugby League World **2.30** Ringside Special **4.00** World Pool League **5.00** Football League Review **6.00** What A Weekend **6.30** The Rugby Club **7.30** Live Ice Hockey **10.00** US Golf **12.00am** Cycling **12.30** The Rugby Club **1.30** Ice Hockey **4.00** Sports Centre **4.15** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00 Wrestling **1.00** Fish TV **2.00** FA Cup Final Classics **3.30** Sports Auction Preview **4.00** Rugby League World **5.30** Inside the PGA Tour **6.00** Cycling **6.30** Tight Lines **7.30** Golf **10.00** Bobby Charlton's Football Scrapbook **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Skiing **8.30** Live Skiing **9.30** Live Women's Biathlon **11.20** Live Women's Skiing **12.30pm** Live Biathlon **2.15** Tennis **4.00** Nordic Combined Skiing **4.30** Live Nordic Combined Skiing **5.30** Racing Line **6.00** Live Tennis **7.30** Live Ski-Jumping **9.00** Live Women's Tennis **10.00** Football **11.00** Racing Line **11.30** Ski-Jumping **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.00** The Bill **9.30** When the Boat Comes In **10.30** Rhoda **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Juliet Bravo **2.00** Dallas **2.55** The Bill **3.25** The Bill **3.55** EastEnders **4.30** Rhoda **5.00** All Creatures Great and Small **6.00** Dynasty **7.00** Ever Decreasing Circles **7.40** Dad's Army **8.20** The Brittas Empire **9.00** The Young Ones **9.40** Bottom **10.20** Common as Muck **11.30** The Bill **12.00** The Bill **12.35am** Blackadder the Third **1.05** French and Saunders **1.45** Dangerfield **2.45** Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Within These Walls **7.00** Holding [illegible]



Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell star in the classic musical *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (Sky Cinema, 6pm)

[illegible]

CARLTON SELECT

[illegible]

DISNEY CHANNEL

[illegible]

FOX KIDS NETWORK

[illegible]

12.05pm Dennis and Gnasher **12.30** Donkey Kong Country **1.00** Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book **1.25** Ace Ventura **1.55** The Incredible Hulk **2.20** Iron Man **2.45** Fantastic Four **3.10** X-Men **3.30** Y-Press **3.35** Spiderman **4.00** Goosebumps **4.25** Hero Turtles: The Next Mutation **4.50** Casper **5.00** Dennis and Gnasher **5.30** Ace Ventura **6.00** Donkey Kong Country **6.30** Eek!Stravaganza **6.55** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.00** Close

NICKELODEON

[illegible]

BRAVO

[illegible]

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

[illegible]

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

[illegible] Unexpected **2.00** Amazing Stories **2.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **3.00** Buck Rogers in the 25th Century **4.00** The Incredible Hulk **5.00** Sightings **6.00** Time Trax **7.00** Quantum Leap **8.00** PSI Factor **9.00** Babylon 5 **10.00 FILM: Downdraft (1996)** **12.00** Twin Peaks **1.00am FILM: The Late Nancy Irving (1984)** **2.30** Twilight Zone **3.00** Dark Shadows **3.30** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Today's Gourmet **6.30** Graham Kerr **7.00** Room Service **7.30** The Painted House **8.00** Wedding Story **8.30** A Baby Story **9.00** Simply Painting **9.30** The Great Gardening Plot **10.00** Global Gardens **10.30** Two's Country Cooking **11.00** The Diceman **11.25** The Home and Leisure House **11.30** Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **12.00** Our House Down Under **12.30pm** Antiques Trail **1.00** Our House **1.30** Hometime **2.00** New Yankee Workshop **2.30** Home Again with Bob Vila **3.00** This Old House with Steve and Norm **3.30** Charlie West Fishing

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt **4.30** A River Somewhere **5.00** Time Travellers **5.30** Terra X **6.00** Wildlife SOS **6.30** Untamed Africa: Mother Courage **7.30** The Quest **8.00** Discover Magazine **9.00** Science Frontiers **10.00** The Great Egyptians **11.00** Forensic Detectives **12.00** Invisible Places **1.00am** Terra X **1.30** Time Travellers **2.00** Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00 The New Adventures of Black Beauty **12.30** Hollywood Safari **1.30** Deadly Australians **2.00** Wildlife ER **2.30** Human/Nature **3.30** Harry's Practice **4.00** Jack Hanna's Zoo Life **4.30** Animal Doctor **5.00** Pet Rescue **5.30** Deadly Australians **6.00** The New Adventures of Black Beauty **6.30** Lassie **7.00** Rediscovery of the World **8.00** Animal Doctor **8.30** The Blue Beyond [illegible]

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

[illegible]

HISTORY

4.00pm Clash of Wings: Air Superiority Lost and Won **5.00** Future Weapons **6.00** Black Death **7.00** The Infamous Dreyfuss Affair

CARLTON FOOD

9.00am Food Network Daily **9.30** Coxon's Kitchen College **10.00** Chef for a Day **10.30** First Taste **11.00** Worrall Thompson Cooks **11.30** A Slice of the Action **12.00** Food Network Daily **12.30pm** Food Factory **1.00** Coxon's Kitchen College **1.30** The Green Gourmet **2.00** The Cookshop **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** Scotland's Larder **3.30** A Slice of the Action **4.00** From the Ground Up **4.30** Indian Kitchen **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny and Crew **6.20** 10 Plus 2 **6.40** Philbert the Frog **6.45** Greedysaurus and the Gang **6.50** Polka Dot Shorts **7.00** Practical Parenting **7.05** Professor Bubble **7.30** Caillou **7.35** Bug Alert **7.55** Practical Parenting **8.00** Barney and Friends **8.25** Babaloos **8.30** Tiny Tales **8.35** Tiny and Crew **8.50** Practical Parenting **9.00** Special Babies **9.30** The Roseanne Show Highlights **10.00** The Jerry Springer Show **10.50** Maury Povich **11.40** Brookside **12.10pm** Through the Keyhole **12.40** Rescue 911 **1.10** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **1.40** Maury Povich **2.30** Special Babies **3.00** The Living Room **3.50** Michael Cole **4.40** Through the Keyhole **5.10** The Heat is On **5.40** Ready, Steady, Cook **6.15** The Jerry Springer Show **7.05** Rescue 911 **7.35** Animal Rescue **8.00** LA Law **9.00 FILM: A Cry in the Dark (1988)** **11.00** Sex Life **12.00am** Close

ZEE TV

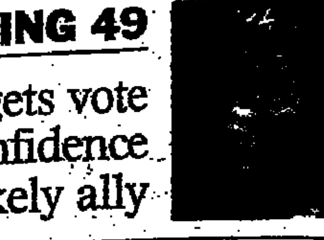
6.00am Char Raasta **6.30** Hit Thi Hit Hai **8.00** Hero Kal Aaj Au **8.30** Awaz Nayee Andaz Wohi **7.00** Faith: Sai Baba **7.30** News **8.00** Karoban Duniya **8.30** Tara **9.00** Zanjeeran **9.30** Zee Health Show **10.00** [illegible]



SARAH POTTER 47
Laying down the party line at the Cheltenham Festival

SPORT

BOXING 49
Lewis gets vote of confidence from unlikely ally



THURSDAY MARCH 11 1999

Champions set to spring to life

Arsenal plan for another march on title

By Matt Dickinson

IN THE dressing-rooms where they make such calculations — namely at Old Trafford, Highbury and Stamford Bridge — there is an accepted wisdom that six defeats are as many as a championship winner can sustain. "This season it may be even fewer than that," Tony Adams believes, but he can afford to. Arsenal may not lose again this year.

The prospect of the champions sprinting for the FA Carling Premiership tape at the same blistering pace as last year began to swirl around Highbury on Tuesday night in the aftermath of the 3-0 victory over Sheffield Wednesday. March 11 was the launch date for ten consecutive league triumphs last season and, once again, Arsenal look ready to burst into spring bloom.

They protest otherwise, insisting that they are four points behind Manchester United, that they have no games in hand and that they did not have to ward off a secondary threat from Chelsea last time. "We are in a weaker points position than last year," Dennis Bergkamp said and, statistically speaking, he is right. But when the Dutchman declared that Arsenal's form was not good enough, it seemed that he was protesting too much. They may be failing to overwhelm weaker opponents, but it is realistic to speculate that they might not lose another game this season — which is probably just as well, given the competition.

With ten matches left, Arsenal's hardest tests are trips to Leeds United and Tottenham Hotspur, where George Graham will relish the chance to pull the welcome mat from under their feet. But, with Emmanuel Petit returning from an ankle injury on Tuesday, the championship-winning side is available again for the first time in more than a month and this time they have attacking reinforcements to draw on.

If Bergkamp and Nicolas Anelka were struggling last year, plan B was Christopher Wreh. On Tuesday night, Wenger could turn first to Kaba Diawara, a winger who bulldozes past full backs with deceptive speed, and Kanu, who makes his £4.5 million fee look more ridiculous with every flick and feint.

TITLE RUN-IN

MANCHESTER UTD		
Mar 13	Newcastle	A
Mar 20	Everton	H
Apr 3	Wimbledon	A
Apr 10	Blackburn	A
Apr 17	Sheff Wed	H
Apr 25	Leeds	A
May 1	Aston Villa	H
May 8	Middlesbrough	A
May 16	Tottenham	H
TBA	Liverpool	A
ARSENAL		
Mar 13	Everton	A
Mar 20	Coventry	H
Apr 3	Southampton	A
Apr 6	Blackburn	H
Apr 10	Tottenham	A
Apr 19	Wimbledon	H
Apr 24	Middlesbrough	A
May 1	Derby	H
May 8	Leeds	A
May 16	Aston Villa	H
CHELSEA		
Mar 13	West Ham	H
Mar 21	Aston Villa	A
Apr 3	Charlton	A
Apr 5	Leeds	H
Apr 10	Wimbledon	A
Apr 18	Leicester	H
Apr 25	Sheff Wed	A
May 1	Everton	H
May 8	Tottenham	A
May 16	Derby	H
TBA	Middlesbrough	A

The defence, meanwhile, gets meaner as it gets older, with the record for the lowest number of goals conceded in a Premiership season seemingly assured. Manchester United hold that honour with 26 last year, but Arsenal have let in just 13. Adams and company may even fancy their chances of breaking Liverpool's record of 16 in the old first division, although that was over 42 rather than 38 games.

Their continued exellence is proof that the redoubtable Arsenal spirit remains undiluted and Arsène Wenger, the manager, is concerned that when he buys players such as Kanu, they are not the type to water it down. "There is so much pressure from the group," he said. "They will not tolerate anybody who does not have that fierce passion and mentality. You either show that you are a winner or you are out. That is why, when I watch a player, I look at his body language. Individual character is more important that culture or nationality.

"Look at people like Emmanuel Petit or Tony Adams. Even if they won the World Cup, the European Cup and the Premiership in the same season, they would go on holiday and still want to win a five-a-side on the beach. As long as there is a chance to win, they will go for it. If you truly love the game, you have to be a winner."

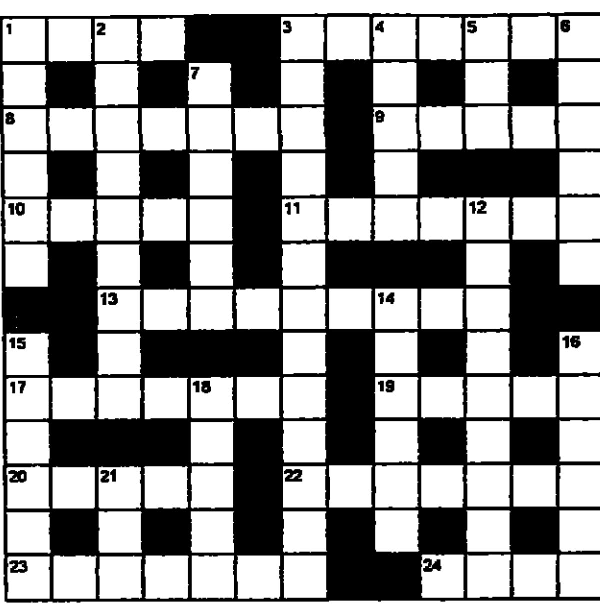
Wenger is unsure whether the continued European involvement of Chelsea and Manchester United is a help or hindrance. He said that the notion that it is a distraction is not borne out by the statistics, which showed that United's domestic form was better last season at the time of their European Cup matches.

As the race gains momentum, the idea that three European Cup places might devalue the prize for winning the Premiership appears to have passed United, Arsenal and Chelsea by. There is no sign of any of them easing up.



Lasse Kjus, of Norway, was in breathtaking form on the Sierra Nevada course in Spain yesterday as he moved closer to winning the World Cup overall title by taking the downhill final to put himself 42 points clear of another Norwegian, Kjetil Andre Aamodt. Photograph: Alessandro Trovati

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1662

ACROSS
1 Regular solid: piece of sugar (4)
3 A veg: *chariot (anag.)* (7)
8 Of pivotal importance (7)
9 Nothing certain, but death and these *(?B. Franklin)* (5)
10 Showy plant: young Pooter (5)
11 Get nearer: (weather) deteriorate (5,2)
13 International game (4,5)
17 The reindeer (7)
19 Path to take (5)
20 Jewish teacher (5)
22 Asked to come (7)
23 Six-sided figure (7)
24 Paradise garden (4)

DOWN
1 Squawk of hen: raucous laugh (6)
2 Imminent-sailing flag (4,5)
3 The Eucharist (4,9)
4 Proportion (5)
5 One steering oarsmen (3)
6 Herbal infusion (6)
7 Evil spirits (6)
12 Spent (9)
14 Prospered (6)
15 Burn with heat (6)
16 Flush with eg shame (6)
18 An entity, creature (5)
21 Fight: container (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1661
ACROSS: 6 Presage 7 H-bomb 9 Sated 10 Monsoon 11 Fan vaulting 14 Hard as nails 17 Riot Act 19 Betel 21 Bagel 22 Victory
DOWN: 1 Vest 2 Sardinia 3 Hermia 4 Thin 5 Polonius 6 Pest 8 Benign 11 Furlough 12 Laid-back 13 Cherub 15 Native 16 Ploy 18 Ally 20 Troy

Williamson may lose big-race ride

By Chris McGrath

NORMAN WILLIAMSON is likely to have to give up the ride on Teeton Mill, the highest-rated chaser in Great Britain, to partner the Irish-trained novice, Nick Dundee, in the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup next Thursday.

Nick Dundee had been expected to run in another race at the Festival, but, while connections remain undecided in public, they are believed to have agreed yesterday that the horse should be thrown in at the deep end for the Gold Cup. Williamson, though mightily impressed by Nick Dundee, was hoping that he would instead contest the Royal & SunAlliance Chase, restricted to novices, the day before the Gold Cup. That preference is shared by Edward O'Grady, Nick Dundee's trainer, but John Magnier, his owner, has the final say.

Through his interest in Coolmore Stud, Magnier is more familiar to followers of Flat racing as one of the biggest names in bloodstock. He has apparently secured Williamson's services with a formal engagement to ride the horse, wherever he runs.



Williamson: likely switch

Backers of Teeton Mill, who disputes favouritism with Florida Pearl, can console themselves with the thought that Tony McCoy, the champion jockey, seems likely to be available as a substitute for Williamson.

McCoy normally rides for Martin Pipe, but he may not be needed by the champion trainer in the Gold Cup. For the time being, connections of Teeton Mill are insisting that, as far as they are concerned, Williamson will ride their horse.

He has partnered Teeton Mill to each of the four wins that have elevated the grey through the ranks at a dramatic rate this season. Building on their success with a light weight in the autumn's big handicap chase, the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, they have produced equally flamboyant displays in level-weight championship company, notably in the Pertemps King George VI Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day.

With each giant stride taken by Teeton Mill, interest has intensified in his Cheltenham showdown with Florida Pearl, the Irish champion. Their encounter looks likely to produce the best Gold Cup for many years. Yet Williamson appears poised to observe their clash from Nick Dundee, who has looked a horse of great potential but must bridge a huge gulf in both form and experience.

Jockeys released, page 45

New sponsor for Scottish football

By Our Sports Staff

THE Scottish Premier League (SPL) yesterday unveiled the Bank of Scotland as its new sponsor in a deal running from now until at least the end of the 2000-01 season. The contract is worth an initial £2.25 million with the option of a further £1.5 million for a third full season.

From yesterday, the division is to be known as the Bank of Scotland Scottish Premier League. The contract is the most lucrative of its kind to be signed in Scotland.

The deal ends several months' of negotiations for a title sponsor for the SPL and comes with the clubs having only ten games remaining of their first season since breaking away from the Scottish Football League.

Roger Mitchell, the SPL chief executive, said: "The sponsorship represents a significant investment on Bank of Scotland's part and the agreement is a real expression of confidence in the SPL.

"We view this as the end of phase one. A lot of people doubted us, but we have delivered a seamless change in the highest-profile sports event in this country. Our primary objective is to create a brighter future for Scottish football and the business partnership we have entered into today is an important part of that."

Jim Farry, the deposed Scottish Football Association (SFA) chief executive, said yesterday that he believes his future now lies outside the game. Farry is still disputing his dismissal and considering legal advice over whether to appeal, after losing the post he held for nine years.

After two decades in football administration, Farry, 44, said that he wants to explore fresh fields. He said: "Right now, my feeling is that I'd like to make a clean break. It's not my intention to pursue a career in football. This isn't to say I will lose my love of the game. I still intend to pursue an interest and watch matches.

"But as far as my own future is concerned, I would hope my track record in running a successful Scottish company might be seen as useful in some other areas of business life."

Farry explained that his family had been put under considerable pressure in recent weeks and emphasised that they had urged him to leave football behind.

He also intimated a reluctance to become embroiled in a lengthy court battle with the SFA because of the impact it would have on his home life. "I would say the view of my family is that I should just get the hell out of football," he said.

"My feeling is that it's been hard enough for my family over the past few days without putting them through another couple of years of this. Anyone who knows me, though, knows of my belief in justice and that I would want the truth to be known.

"But the last thing my family would want is for me to become an obsessive old man with long fingernails, worrying my life away about a long, drawn-out court case."

Race for promotion 48
Quinn enjoys dual role 48

